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My Son, Listen to the Instruction of Your Father : An Analysis of How the Father's Rhetoric in Proverbs 1-7 Continues and Climaxes in Proverbs 8-9

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MY SON, LISTEN TO THE INSTRUCTION OF YOUR FATHER:
AN ANALYSIS OF HOW THE FATHER'S RHETORIC IN PROVERBS 1–7
CONTINUES AND CLIMAXES IN PROVERBS 8–9

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A Dissertation Presented to the Faculty of
Concordia Seminary, St. Louis,
Department of Exegetical Theology
in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

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By
Hsiao–Yung Liu (Samuel)
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Approved by_____

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went through so many challenges and tears with me during these years, especially during her time of carrying our yet–to–be–born son, whom we have already name Ren–Guang (Nathan). Without her love and support, it would have been impossible for me to come this far. I love her and I thank her with all my heart. To my family and all whom God uses to grant me His wisdom, this work is cordially dedicated.

תְּחִלַּת חָכְמָה יִרְאַת יְהוָה וְדַעַת קְדֹשִׁים בִּינָה
(Proverbs 9:10)

ABBREVIATIONS

PERIODICALS, SERIES, AND REFERENCE PUBLICATIONS

AT   Arbeiten zur Theologie

AB   Anchor Bible

ABD   David N. Freedman, ed., *Anchor Bible Dictionary*. New York: Doubleday Dell, 1992.

ANET   J. B. Pritchard, ed., *Ancient Near Eastern Texts*. 3rd ed. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1969.

AUSS   *Andrews University Seminary Studies*

BDB   F. Brown, S. R. Driver, and C. Briggs, *Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament*. Repr. Oxford: Clarendon, 1959.

BETL   *Bibliotheca ephemeridum theologicarum lovaniensium*

BHS   K. Elliger and W. Rudoph, ed., *Biblica Hebraica Stuttgartensia*. Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelstiftung, 1967–1977.

Bib   *Biblica*

BibLit   Bible and Literature Series

BSac   *Bibliotheca sacra*

BZAW   *Beiheft zur Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenchaft*

CBQ   *Catholic Biblical Quarterly*

CBQMS   Catholic Biblical Quarterly Monograph Series

CWE   *Collected Works of Erasmus*

ECLT   Irena R. Makaryk, ed. *Encyclopedia of Contemporary Literature Theory*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1993.

ER   Thomas O. Sloane, ed. *Encyclopedia of Rhetoric*. Oxford/New York: Oxford University Press, 2001.

FAT   Forschungen zum Alten Testament

FOTL   The Forms of the Old Testament Literature

HUCA	*Hebrew Union College Annual*
IBC	Interpretation: A Biblical Commentary for Teaching and Preaching
IBT	Interpreting Biblical Texts
ICC	International Critical Commentary
Int	*Interpretation*
ITC	International Theological Commentary
JBL	*Journal of Biblical Literature*
JETS	*Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society*
JOTS	*Journal of Old Testament Studies*
JQR	*Jewish Quarterly Review*
JSOTSup	Journal of the Society of Old Testament – Supplement Series
LCL	*Loeb Classic Library*
MCB	Mercer Commentary on the Bible
NAC	New American Commentary
NCB	New Century Bible Commentary
NIB	*New Interpreter's Bible*
NICOT	New International Commentary of the Old Testament
OTL	Old Testament Library
Proof	*Prooftexts: A Journal of Jewish Literary History*
RB	*Revue biblique*
SBL	Society of Biblical Literature
SBLDS	Society of Biblical Literature Dissertation Series
SBT	Studies in Biblical Theology
SBS	Stuttgarter Bibelstudien
SOTSMS	Society for Old Testament Study Series Monograph Series

TB	*Theologische Beiträge*
TDOT	G. Botterweck and H. Ringren, eds. *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament.* Vols. 1–12. Grand Rapids: Ererdmans, 1974–2001.
TOTC	Tyndale Old Testament Commentary
VT	*Vetus Testamentum*
VTSup	Supplement to *Vetus Testamentum*
WBC	Word Biblical Commentary
UBSMon	United Biblical Society Monograph Series
WMANT	Wissenschaftliche Monographien zum Alten und Neuen Testament
ZAW	*Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft*
ZBK	Zurcher Bibelkommentare

ANCIENT VERSIONS

LXX	Septuagint
MT	Masoretic Text
Syr	Syriac Peshitto
Tg	Targum
Vg	Vulgate

MODERN TRANSLATIONS

ASV	American Standard Version
BBE	The Bible in Basic English
KJV	King James Version
NAB	The New American Bible
NAS	New American Standard Bible

NJB	The New Jerusalem Bible
NKJ	New King James Version
NIV	New International Version
NRS	New Revised Standard Version
RSV	Revised Standard Version

MISCELLANEOUS

ANE	Ancient Near East
ca.	circa, of approximately
cf.	compare
ch(s).	chapter(s)
diss.	Dissertation
ed(s).	editor(s), edited by
e.g.	for example
et al.	*et alii*, and others
ET	English translation
ibid.	*ibidem*, the same place
i.e.	*id est*, that is
trans.	translator(s)
v	verse
vv	verses
vol(s)	volume(s)

ABSTRACT

Liu, Hsiao–Yung (Samuel) "My Son, Listen to the Instruction of Your Father: An Analysis of How the Father Rhetoric in Proverbs 1–7 Continues and Climaxes in Proverbs 8–9." Ph.D. diss., Concordia Seminary, 2007. 200 pp.

This dissertation proposes the thesis that the father's rhetoric in Prov 1–7 continues and climaxes in Prov 8–9, thus supporting the unity of Prov 1–9. Although diverse voices and genres make the reading of Prov 1–9 difficult, there still exists the unifying perspective of the implied speaker in the text, which is the father's rhetoric,

Therefore, assuming that one single author or editor completed the current text in Prov 1–9, this investigation proposes that the *Sitz im Leben* of the text is family and the speaker is a father, whose rhetoric is the key to a unified reading of Proverbs 1–9. That is, the same person who says *directly* in the fatherly discourses, "My son, listen to the instruction of your father" (Prov 1:8; see also 2:1; 3:1; 3:21; 4:10, 20; 5:1; 6:1; 6:20; 7:1) is also the one using the wisdom poems of Proverbs 8–9 to communicate *indirectly*. In other words, this speaking father uses the figure of personified Wisdom in Prov 8–9 as the rhetorical/imagery device to continue and to climax what he has said in the previous discourses (Prov 1–7) so that the speaker obtains a stronger rhetorical/ persuasive effect upon the listener (the listening son) and makes him listen/obey.

In order to find a unity in the text, scholars try to fill the gap made by the difference/ discontinuity of the father's voice (Prov 1–7) and wisdom's voice (Prov 8–9), providing different interpretations in the structure and reading of the text. To explain how the continuity and climax are set up, this study examines the work of both form–redactional critics and feminist critics on Proverbs 1–9. While both offer interesting insights, neither deals adequately with the challenges of the text, particularly in the area of discontinuity (e.g., the discontinuity existing between the fatherly discourses [Prov 1–7] and the wisdom poems [Prov 8–9]). Responding to the discontinuity and dialoguing with these two methods, this study employs rhetorical criticism to demonstrate how the father's rhetoric in Prov 1–7 continues and climaxes in Prov 8–9, thus creating a unity within the nine chapters.

In the content of the dissertation, this study will argue the thesis step by step. Chapter 1 provides a general introduction concerning the setting, assumption, rationale, demarcation and outlines of this dissertation. Chapter 2 gives an overview of the secondary literature regarding form–redactional and feminist criticism, showing how these studies are able to explain the text and structure but are inadequate to approach Prov 1–7 and 8–9 holistically. Chapter 3 is the introduction to the methodology that this study follows. This study uses rhetorical criticism to help prove its thesis. Chapter 4 demonstrates the rhetorical strategies concerning how this study develops the rationale in this thesis. Chapter 5 investigates the structure and content arrangement of the father's rhetoric in the compositional dimension, in which symmetry and repetition are the two principles used to investigate the inclusio, center, chiasmus, contrast, and climax of the text. Chapter 6 deals with the persuasive dimension, particularly with the stylistic elements, the speaker's ethos, the listener's pathos and imagery devices. Chapter 7 presents the conclusions of this study based on all that has gone before. The thesis that the father's rhetoric in Prov 1–7 continues and climaxes in Prov 8–9 will be confirmed.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

The Book of Proverbs "has been very popular in Western culture, both for the picturesque language and for the timely truths it is seen to convey. It is quoted freely, and many times not exactly, and it has received greater authority than many another book of Holy Writ. But the true subtlety of the book is seldom recognized in its popular usage."[1] This is especially true for Prov 1–9.

Although diverse voices[2] and genres[3] make the reading of Prov 1–9 difficult, there still exists a unifying perspective in the text. To read Prov 1–9 properly requires an appreciation and recognition of the father's rhetoric.[4] This thesis proposes that the father's rhetoric in Prov 1–7 continues and climaxes in Prov 8–9, thus supporting the unity of Prov 1–9.

The study of Prov 1–9 has drawn much scholarly attention in recent years because:

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[1] Roland E. Murphy, *The Tree of Life: An Exploration of Biblical Wisdom Literature* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1996), 15.

[2] For instances, King Solomon is the implied speaker according to the superscription (1:1). Different voices are also provided by a father (1:8; 2:1; 3:1; 3:21; 4: 10, 20; 6:1; 5:1; 6:20; 7:1), some sinners (1:10–14), personified Wisdom (1:20–33; 8:4–36; 9:4–12), personified Understanding (8:1), a seductress (7:13–20) and personified Folly (9:13–18).

[3] The materials of diverse genres exist in Prov 1–9. There are the prologue (1:1–6), the ten fatherly discourses initiating with the vocative בְּנִי (I. 1:8–19; II. 2:1–22; III. 3:1–20; IV. 3:21–35, V. 4:10–19; VI. 4:20–27; VII. 5:1–23; VIII. 6:1–19; IX. 6:20–35; and X. 7:1–27), some interludes (1:20–33; 4:1–9), wisdom poems (8:1–36; 9:1–12) and a folly poem (9:13–18). These genres are located dispersedly and hardly demonstrate a consistency.

[4] The "father's rhetoric" is the rhetoric provided by the implied speaker, namely the father in Prov 1–9. This study proposes that the father's rhetoric is the holistic perspective which unifies the different materials in the text and provides a consistent interpretation for the discontinuities caused by the diverse voices and genres.

(1) the function and style of Prov 1–9 are very different from the rest of the Book of Proverbs and need to be treated differently;[5] (2) the intermixed structure of Prov 1–9 forces its readers to ask why and how the two different genres, namely fatherly discourses (chapters 1–7, except for Prov 1:20–33) and wisdom poems (chapters 8–9), are placed together;[6] and (3) the role of wisdom is such an important issue in interpreting these nine chapters.[7] In fact, all of these concerns demand asking whether there is unity in the text of Prov 1–9 and, if so, precisely how the reading of the text continues from the fatherly discourses (Prov 1–7) into the wisdom–focused materials (Prov 8–9).

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[5] According to Zimmerli, Prov 1–9 is treated as the "hermeneutical guide" for understanding the rest of the book. See Walther Zimmerli, "Zur Struktur der alttestamentlichen Weisheit," *ZAW* 51 (1933): 189 and also 175–207. Also see the relevant discussion in Brevard S. Childs, *Introduction to the Old Testament as Scripture* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1979), 552–3. Hummel approaches these chapters as "the capstone" of the entire canonical collection (the Book of Proverbs). See Horace D. Hummel, *The Word Becoming Flesh: An Introduction to the Origin, Purpose, and Meaning of the Old Testament* (St. Louis: Concordia, 1979), 454.

[6] For instance, based on Prov 9:1, "Wisdom has built her house, she has hewn out her seven pillars (עַמּוּדֶיהָ שִׁבְעָה)," Skehan sees Prov 1 and 8–9 as a framework and Prov 2–7 as composed of the seven poems (seven columns). See Patrick W. Skehan, "The Seven Columns of Wisdom's House in Proverbs 1–9," *CBQ* 9 (1947):190–98; "A Single Editor for the Whole Book of Proverbs," *CBQ* 9 (1948): 115–30; "Wisdom's House," *CBQ* 29 (1967): 162–180; *Studies in Israelite Poetry and Wisdom*, CBQMS 1 (Washington, D. C.: Catholic Biblical Association, 1971), 1–14. Waltke finds the concentric pattern (ABCD–D'C'B'A') in Prov 1–9, piecing all materials of various genres together. See Waltke, *The Book of Proverbs Chapters 1–15* (*NICO*; Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2004), 12–13.

[7] For instance, in order to interpret Prov 1–9, Boström uses a cultic perspective to approach the figure of wisdom and finds a similarity between the Canaanite goddess Asherah and this personified Wisdom. Gustav Boström, *Proverbiastudien. Die Weisheit und die Fremde Weib in Spr. 1–9* (Lund: Gleerup, 1935), 12–14 and 135. Kayatz considers the prototype for personified Wisdom (Prov 8:1–36) to be the Egyptian goddess *Maat*, in which light he approaches the meaning of the text in Prov 1–9. See Christa Kayatz, *Studien zu Proverbien 1–9: Eine form– und motivgeschichtliche Untersuchung unter Einbeziehung ägyptischen Vergleichmaterials* (WMANT 22; Neukirchen–Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1966), 93–119. Also see the relevant discussion in Helmer Ringgren, *Word and Wisdom: Studies in Hypostatization of Divine Qualities and Functions in the Ancient Near East* (Lund: Häkan Ohlssons Boktryckeri, 1947), 132–34; Mark S. Smith, *The Early History of God: Yahweh and the Other Deities in Ancient Israel* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Erdmans, 2002), 133–135; and Claudia V. Camp, *Wisdom and the Feminine in the Book of Proverbs* (BLS 11; Sheffield: Almond Press, 1985), 95, 103, 106, 115, 133, 187–90, 276, and 283. In addition, not a few scholars use the figure of wisdom as a literary device (e.g., a metaphor) to interpret these nine chapters, including Perdue, Horne, Leeuwen, Bullock and Bland. See Leo G. Perdue, *Proverbs* (IBC; Louisville, Ky.: John Knox, 2000), 48, 36–39 and 48–51; Milton P. Horne, *Proverbs – Ecclesiastes* (SHBS 12; Macon, Ga.: Smyth & Helwys, 2003), 37; Raymond C. Van Leeuwen, *Proverbs* (*NIB* 5; Nashville, Tenn.: Abingdon, 1997), 36; C. Hassel Bullock, *An Introduction to the Poetic Books of the Old Testament* (Chicago, Ill.: Moody Press, 1979), 157; and Dave Bland, *Proverbs, Ecclesiastes & Song of Songs* (Joplin, Miss.: College Press, 2002), 47–49.

Assumption of This Study

Therefore, assuming that one single author or editor completed the current text in Prov 1–9,[8] this investigation proposes that the *Sitz im Leben* of the text is family and the speaker is a father,[9] whose rhetoric is the key to a unified reading of Proverbs 1–9. That is, the same person who says *directly* in the fatherly discourses, "My son, listen to the instruction of your father" (Prov 1:8; see also 2:1; 3:1; 3:21; 4:10, 20; 5:1; 6:1; 6:20; 7:1) is also the one using the wisdom poems of Proverbs 8–9 to communicate *indirectly*. In other words, this speaking father uses the figure of personified Wisdom in Prov 8–9 as the rhetorical/imagery device to continue and climax what he has said in the previous discourses (Prov 1–7) so that the speaker obtains a stronger rhetorical/persuasive effect

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[8] In recent years, more scholars are inclined to support single authorship (especially Solomon), including Kitchen, Wlatke and Longman. See Kenneth A. Kitchen, "Proverbs and Wisdom Books of the Ancient Near East: The Factual History of a Literary Form," *TB* 28 (1977): 69–144; Waltke, *The Book of Proverbs Chapters 1–15*, 31–36; and Tremper Longman III, *Proverbs* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Academic, 2006), 23–26. Opposing this view are McKane, Whybray and Fox. See William McKane, *Proverbs* (OTL; London: SCM Press, 1970), 1–22; Ronald N. Whybray *Proverbs* (NCB, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1994), 3–18; and Michael V. Fox, *Proverbs 1–9* (AB 18A; New York: Doubleday, 2000), 6–12, 322–330. Although Whybray identifies many hands in the completion of Prov 1–9, he has to confess, "In as far as Proverbs may be said to have a structural—as distinct from a thematic—unity, this is due to a final editor who has imposed his stamp on his collection of originally disparate works" (Ibid., 15).

[9] There are several advantages to support this postulation: (1) the autobiographical memory (Prov 4:1–4) reinforces fathership in the text where the speaker says "when I was a son to 'my father'" (בֶּן הָיִיתִי לְאָבִי כִּי). " This speaker is talking about his own father, who is obviously the grandfather of the listener. (2) The viewpoint developed in the ten fatherly discourses of Prov 1–9 is a father's rhetoric. For instance, the warning against the strange woman (זָרָה) in Prov 5 (also Prov 2:16–19; 6:25–35) fits best from the perspective of a man who has personally experienced the harm associated with the strange woman or who at least has known some of her victims. (3) The ancient Egyptian and Mesopotamian texts of instruction are saturated with the sapiential formulae of the father–son terminology ("my son") for the purpose of pedagogy. Prov 1–9 comes from the same ancient world of those texts. For instance, *The Instructions of Suruppak* starts its admonition with "My son, I will give you instruction, do not neglect my instructions" *ANET*, 594. Many Egyptian instructions are the discourses or lectures that a father addresses to his son (e.g. *The Instruction Addressed to King Merikare, The Instruction of King Amenemhet I for His Son Sesostris I,* and *The Instruction of Any,* see ibid., 414–421). (4) The tradition of the Hebrew texts provides the nuance for the role of father in the speeches. The father–son formula is found abundantly in the canonical texts and Apocrypha (Job 1:2, 4–5; 29:16; Qoh 12:12 and chapters 2, 3, 7, 6, 10, 11, 14, 16, 18, 21, 30, 37–40, 45–50 in Ben Sirach). And both the patriarchal history (Gen 12–50 and etc.) and the lifestyle of ancient Israel's society that reflected this fatherly connection in the rest of the OT (e.g. Pss 34:11; 78:3) can help show that a father is the primary candidate as the speaker in the series of the long talks of Prov 1–9. In particular, the catechetical responsibility that was carried by fathers (cf. Deut 6:4–25; Exod 12:26, 27; 13:14; Josh 4:6–7, 21–23), reinforces the association of the chief speaking role in Prov 1–9 with the earlier history of Israel.

upon the listener (the listening son) and makes him listen/obey.

There is not a general consensus on the actual *Sitz im Leben* or origin of Prov 1–9. Claus Westermann introduces several possible origins of wisdom sayings (human congeniality, royal court, school, clan or family),[10] of which school and family are more acceptable than others.[11] The supporters of the school–origin theory (e.g., Whybray, Crenshaw and Estes) use ancient near–East discoveries to hypothesize the existence of wisdom schools in ancient Israel (father as teacher).[12] There are also scholars (e.g., Gilbert, Robert, and Dürr)[13] who support the family–origin theory and consider that the family is the milieu of these nine chapters (father is father). This study follows the family–origin theory.

In order to find a unity in the text, scholars try to fill the gap made by the difference/discontinuity of the father's voice (Prov 1–7) and wisdom's voice (Prov 8–9), providing different interpretations in the structure and reading of the text.

In order to explain how the continuity and climax are set up, this study will examine the work of both form–redactional critics and feminist critics in Proverbs 1–9. While both offer interesting insights, neither deals adequately with the challenges of the text,

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[10] Claus Westermann, *Wurzeln der Weisheit* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1990; ET: *The Roots of Wisdom*, Louisville, Ky.: John Knox, 1995), 6–37.

[11] See the relevant discussion in R. N. Whybray, *The Book of Proverbs: A Survey of Modern Study* (Leiden, Netherlands: Brill, 1995), 67–68 and Murphy, *The Tree of Life*, 4.

[12] See James L. Crenshaw, *Education in Ancient Israel: Across the Deadening Silence* (New York: Doubleday Dell, 1998); Daniel J. Estes, *Hear, My Son: Teaching and Learning in Proverbs 1–9* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1997); N. R. Whybray, *The Intellectual Tradition in the Old Testament* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1974) and "The Sage in the Israelite Royal Court" in *The Sage in Israel and the Ancient Near East* (ed. J. G. Gammie and L. G. Perdue; Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1990), 133–139.

[13] See Maurice Gilbert, "Le discourse de la Sagesse en Proverbes, 8. Structure et cohérence" in *La Sagesse de l'Ancien Testament* (*BETL* 51; ed. Maurice Gilbert, Gembloux: Duculot, 1979), 202–218. André Robert, "Les attaches littéraires bibliques des Prov I–IX," *RB* 43 (1934): 42–68, 172–204, 374–384 and also *RB* 44 (1935): 344–365, 502–525; Lorenz Dürr, *Das Erziehungswesen im Alten Testament und im antiken Orient* (Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs, 1932).

particularly in the area of discontinuity (e.g., the discontinuity existing between the

fatherly discourses [Prov 1–7] and the wisdom poems [Prov 8–9]). Responding to the

discontinuity and dialoguing with these two methods, this study employs rhetorical

criticism to demonstrate how the father's rhetoric in Prov 1–7 continues and climaxes in

Prov 8–9, thus creating a unity within the nine chapters.

Demarcation of the Text

In order to investigate how the father's rhetoric works in the text, an appropriate

demarcation of the text is necessary. Why is the range of Prov 1–9 on focus rather than

other choices, for instance, the range of Prov 1–7 or 1–24?[14] In fact, the content disorder

of the Book of Proverbs in the LXX (Septuagint) makes it difficult to decide on the

proper limit.[15] Fortunately there is still an overall agreement in those ancient witnesses on

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[14] Besides the range of Prov .1–9, there are several possibilities for studying the father's rhetoric. Based on the biblical narrative (1 Kgs 3:5–14; 4:29–34; 5:7, 21; 10:2b, 3, 23–25; 11:41–43; 2 Chron 1:7–9; 5:9–14; 21, 26; 9:22–24) and Proverbs (1:1; 10:1; 25:1), King Solomon is possibly the major contributor/author of Prov 1–24. See the discussion in Kitchen, "Proverbs and Wisdom Books of the Ancient Near East," 69–144. If so and the father's rhetoric is also undeniable in Prov 1–9, why does this father's rhetoric not continue till Prov 24? Pemberton recognizes a father's rhetoric only in Prov 1–7 and excludes the wisdom materials in Prov 8–9. See Glenn D. Pemberton, *The Rhetoric of the Father: A Rhetorical Analysis of the Father/Son Lectures in Proverbs 1–9* (PhD diss.; Denver: Iliff School of Theology, 1999). Instead of Prov 1–9, Prov 1–7 could be the other choice of a range to study how the father' rhetoric works in the text.

[15] The Book of Proverbs is notorious for the differences between its ancient manuscripts. According to E. Tov, "Beyond the freedom of 𝔊's (LXX's) translation of Proverbs, one discerns in the translation editorial features recognizable in its differences in order, minuses, and pluses, all differing from 𝔐 (the Masoretic Text) 𝔗 (Targum) 𝔖 (Peshitta translation in Syriac) 𝔙 (Vulgate translation)." Emanuel Tov, *Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1992), 337, and "Recessional Differences between the Masoretic Text and the Septuagint of Proverbs," *Of Scribes and Scrolls, Studies on the Hebrew Bible, Intertestamental Judaism, and Christian Origins Presented to J. Sturgnell* (College Theology Society Resources in Religion 5; ed. H. W. Attridge et al. Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1990), 43–56. For example, Prov 24–31 in the Septuagint's translation has a different order in verse and chapters, as follows: 24:1–22; 30:1–14 ("The words of Agur" – part one); 24:23–24 ("These are also by the Sages"); 30:15–33 ("The words of Agur" – part two); 31:1–9 ("The words of Lemuel" – part one); chapters 25–29; 31:10–31 ("The words of Lemuel" – part two). Cook summarizes the problems of differences this way: "If they (the differences) are ascribed to the translator, then this version of the book of Proverbs will be less useful for the textual criticism of the Hebrew Bible. However, the contrary will apply if the deviations could be extroverted to different Hebrew *Vorlagen*." Johann Cook, *The Septuagint of Proverbs: Jewish and/or Hellenistic Proverbs?* (VTSup 69; Leiden: Brill, 1997), 2. After a careful study of Proverbs 1, 2, 6, 8, and 9, Cook also concludes that the greatest numbers of differences are due to the creativeness of

the range of Prov 1–9, regardless of the Septuagint's disorder in Prov 24–31.[16]

This study demarcates Prov 1–9 to study how the father's rhetoric works out the
continuity and unity in the text because of the following reasons: (1) the Solomonic
superscriptions (מִשְׁלֵי שְׁלֹמֹה, "the Proverbs of Solomon") appear in both Prov 1:1 and
10:1, obviously and intentionally making Prov 1–9 an integral block; (2) the form/genre
of Prov 1–9 is unique and has to be studied separately from the rest of Proverbs;[17] (3) the
consistent markers such as בְּנִי ("my son") and חָכְמוֹת/חָכְמָה ("wisdom") occur almost
always at the beginning of a new discourse;[18] (4) the capstone/rhetorical motto יְהֹוָה

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the translator. Thus "the Septuagint version of Proverbs should be treated with the utmost caution when
utilized for text–critical purposes." Ibid., 334. See also the relevant discussion in Tov, "Recessional
Differences between the Masoretic Text and the Septuagint of Proverbs," 43–56.

[16] See the translations of Prov 1–9 in the Targum, Syriác Peshitta and Vulgate. For instance, except
for some verses (such as 4:7; 8:33) that are lacking in the translation of LXX, the integrity and unity of the
text in Prov 1–9 stand firm regardless of those disorders in Prov 24–31. That is, the received text that those
ancient translators worked is integral at least in the entire block of Prov 1–9. Besides, the Qumran
manuscripts that come from Cave 4 are not very helpful in approaching the text of Prov1–9. The
manuscript of 4QProv[a] (4Qum102) has only Prov 1:27–2:1, and 4QProv[b] (4Qum103) preserves Prov
13:6b–9b; 14:6–10; 14:31–15:8 and 15:19b–31.

[17] The uniqueness of Prov 1–9 is recognized by its genre or form. Gottwald categorizes the block of
Prov 1–9 as "admonition, generally structured in the A___ / B___ // verse form, either appearing in
isolation among proverbs or grouped as an *Instruction* delivered by an authoritative teacher to a learner."
(italic Gottwald's) Norman K. Gottwald, *The Hebrew Bible: A Socio–Literary Introduction* (Philadelphia:
Fortress, 1985), 565. The block of Prov 1–9 is full of long admonitions/poems, which are quite different
from the indicative/short sayings in Prov 10–29 (except for the admonitions in 22:17–24:22). As Waltke
indicates, "In the longer poems (Prov 1–9) the rational connection between the verses and their boundaries
is much more apparent than the rational schemes and the limits of sentences–sayings groupings. Moreover,
the longer poems tend to contain enough extended discourse to protect themselves against
misinterpretation; but the short sentence–sayings tend to express a truth that may seem like the whole truth,
but in fact these sayings must be qualified by other sentence–sayings. Also, the sentence–sayings demand
more wit from their audience to see their meaning. As a result, the prologue's clear, long admonitory
poems (Prov 1–9) set the stage for the interpretation of the less clear sentence–sayings (Prov 10:1–29:27
except for 22:17–24:22). The prologue (Prov 1–9) forges the book's hermeneutical key." (parenthesis
mine) Waltke, *The Book of Proverbs Chapters 1–15*, 58.

[18] The consistent markers locates where the block of the text is. The ten same/consistent markers בְּנִי
("my son" in 1:8; 2:1; 3:1; 3:21; 4:10, 20; 6:1; 5:1; 6:20; 7:1; except בָּנִים ["sons"] the plural form in 4:1)
and the two initial markers חָכְמוֹת/חָכְמָה (8:1; 9:1; also cf. 1:20) that appear at every beginning of the
discourses in Prov 1–9 are to build up a rhetorical/integral network so that the reader/listener could track
these markers without distracting from what the speaker says. The intention of the original author or editor
is quite obvious in treating Prov 1–9 as an integral block.

יִרְאַת ("the fear of Yahweh") forms an *inclusio* at both the beginning and ending of Prov 1–9 (1:7; 9:10);[19] and (5) the rhetorical prologue implies the integrity of the following content (1:2–6).[20] Based on these reasons, this study will concentrate on the text of Prov 1–9.

Rationale

If a proverb is oral in nature and designed to achieve a purpose, investigating how the content of Prov 1–9 tries to communicate is a significant task. As Clifford states:

> The book of Proverbs means something a bit different by proverb and instruction than we do. Our preferences and biases need not stand in the way of enjoying the book and profiting from its shrewd and often surprising point of view. Why? Essentially, because Proverbs does not provide information. It

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[19] The motto יִרְאַת יְהוָה ("the fear of Yahweh") expressed in the way of *inclusio* obviously functions as a reminder of what is most important. As Crenshaw indicates, "By fear of the Lord these sages called attention to religious devotion in the richest sense of the phrase. It meant, purely and simply, that which every human being owes the creator. That is why the editor who wrote the motto for the first collection of Proverbs (Prov 1–9) can affirm that religious devotion constitutes the beginning and fundamental principle of all knowledge. Without a vital relationship with God, no one could possibly attain sufficient wisdom to merit the adjective 'wise.'" (parenthesis mine) James L. Crenshaw, *Old Testament Wisdom: An Introduction* (Louisville, Ky.: John Knox, 1998), 79. In fact, this *inclusio* has illustrated that the text of Prov 1–9 must be treated as an integral whole.

[20] The rhetorical prologue implies the integrity existing between the fatherly discourses (Prov 1–7) and the wisdom poems (Prov 8–9). In the initial verse (1:2a) the parallel positions of חָכְמָה ("wisdom") and מוּסָר ("instruction") has implied the following combination of the fatherly instruction (Prov 1–7) and the wisdom poems (Prov 8–9) for the listener/reader. The term מוּסָר ("instruction") is usually used together with אָב ("father," 1:8; 4:1; cf. 4:13; 5:12, 23; 6:23) in Prov 1–7 and can be the best representative for the fatherly discourses in nature (instruction/discipline). The term חָכְמָה ("wisdom") as well as its plural form חָכְמוֹת ("wisdom") which are crowned at the beginning of the wisdom poems (1:20; 3:13; 8:1; 9:1) is surely to indicate what the following material/genre is on purpose. It is a rhetorical design that the combination of these two terms (חָכְמָה and מוּסָר) appears again in the rhetorical motto (1:7b) so that the implied listener/reader will be impressed by the combination of the fatherly discourses and the wisdom poems. This forms an *inclusio* at the very beginning and very ending of the prologue (1:2a and 7b). Moreover, the piling up of synonymous terms in the prologue (1:2–6), including אִמְרֵי בִינָה ("the words of understanding"), עָרְמָה ("prudence"), דַּעַת ("knowledge"), מְזִמָּה ("discretion"), לֶקַח ("learning") and תַּחְבֻּלוֹת ("counsels"), more or less helps to illustrate these two terms (חָכְמָה and מוּסָר) as von Rad indicates: "It is more reasonable to assume that the hypnotic piling up of nouns is an attempt to delimit a specific area of sense by the use of words which are full of meaning." Gerhard Von Rad, *Wisdom in Israel* (New York: Abingdon, 1972), 30.

is not a book of facts. Its "wisdom" is a skill, an art–the art of living well. Its concern is not *what* but *how*."[21]

Clifford's opinion on Proverbs is insightful not only for the short sayings in Prov 10:1–29:27 but also for the long discourses in Prov 1–9. If the speaker behind these long discourses is a father and the figure of wisdom is also recognized as being the effect of emphasis (climax), there must be reasons to explain how that happens. Although Fox doesn't accept the existence of the father's rhetoric in the wisdom poems (Prov 8–9), he admits that

> The *what* and the *how* can be discussed separately, but in reality they are almost inseparable, for the nature of wisdom is to a large degree determined by the personae who speak it, their rhetoric, and their relations to their audience. This is especially true in the personification interludes, where the persona is wisdom, but it pertains in the lectures as well, where the conduit of wisdom is the father. The authors of the Ten Lectures and the Wisdom interludes chose to speak to us by means of personae instead of the direct authorial voice. The creation of effective personae was instrumental in imbuing the readers not only with knowledge but also with attitudes and perspectives that will guide their behavior for the years to come.[22]

This study will focus on this *how* question to observe the father's rhetoric working in Prov 1–7 and to provide an explanation for the same rhetoric's continuation and climax in Prov 8–9.

In order to illuminate how the father's rhetoric works in the structure and reading, it is necessary to investigate the repetition and symmetry that exist in the text of Prov 1–9.[23]

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[21] Richard J. Clifford, *The Wisdom Literature* (IBT; Nashville, Tenn.: Abingdon, 1998), 42–3 (italic Clifford's).

[22] Fox, *Proverbs 1–9*, 346 (italic Fox's).

[23] Repetition and symmetry, the two major features that this study will examine in the text, are dominant in the structure and reading of Prov 1–9. According to Wilson, "The World of the Bible was quite differently conceived and expressed than our own. Its principles of communication were grounded in pragmatic symmetries that attended to the center, and in repetition which cultivated the mnemonic rhythms so critical to an oral world. These principles are reflected in relatively stable patterns of communication such as the type–scene and genre forms which act as standard containers for similar types of material or teaching. Repetition and symmetry find many expressions in parallel arrangements from the two line poetic

This study will present the evidence in the *compositional* and *persuasive* dimensions to explain how the father's rhetoric creates continuity and climax in the structure and reading of Prov 1–9.[24] That is, the study will investigate the structure and content arrangement (compositional dimension) in order to take a macroscopic look at the text of Prov 1–9. In the persuasive dimension, this author will examine microscopic evidences such as stylistic elements (linguistic evidence), ethos, pathos, and imagery devices in Prov 1–9 in order to illustrate how the father uses his rhetoric to achieve his pedagogical goals. All of these areas are where rhetorical criticism can help "to explore the text on its own terms."[25]

Outline of This Study

In what follows, this study will argue the thesis step by step. Chapter 2 gives an overview of the secondary literature regarding form–redactional and feminist criticism, showing how these studies are able to explain the text and structure but are inadequate to approach Prov 1–7 and 8–9 holistically. Form–redactional criticism presents the different layers that its supporters think originally existed in the text. Feminist criticism provides a different landscape for the text according to its ideology.

Chapter 3 is the introduction to the methodology that this study follows. The study

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couplet to extended narrative shaping through chiasms and balanced episodes." Victor M. Wilson, *Divine Symmetries: The Art of Biblical Rhetoric* (Lanham: University Press of America, 1997), 32–3.

[24] Möller adopts Trible's definition on rhetorical criticism and indicates: "Rhetorical criticism can take many different forms, but in biblical studies its two most dominant orientations are what have been called the 'art of composition' and the 'art of persuasion'." Karl Möller, "Rhetorical Criticism," *Dictionary for Theological Interpretation of the Bible* (ed. Kevin J. Vanhoozer; Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker, 2005), 689. Triple calls the approach that utilizes Muilenburg's opinion in analyzing the structure of a passage the art of composition. The other branch of rhetorical criticism represented by Y. Gitay, she names the art of persuasion. Phyllis Trible, *Rhetorical Criticism: Context, Method, and the Book of Jonah* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1994), 25–48. The idea of these two dimensions is inspired by Trible.

[25] To investigate the symmetry in the Bible, Wilson uses rhetorical method "to explore the text on its own terms." Wilson, *Divine Symmetries*, 6.

uses rhetorical criticism to help prove its thesis. This chapter provides a brief history of classic rhetoric, and explains how rhetorical criticism is related to Biblical studies and especially the area of Prov 1–9.

Chapter 4 demonstrates the rhetorical strategies concerning how this study develops its rationale. First, this chapter focuses on the structure and content arrangement in the compositional dimension. In order to reinforce what is discovered in the compositional dimension, the evidences of stylistic elements, ethos, pathos and imagery devices in the persuasive dimension are provided to support the thesis.

Chapter 5 investigates the structure and content arrangement of the father's rhetoric in the compositional dimension, in which symmetry and repetition are the two principles used to investigate the inclusio, center, chiasmus, contrast and climax of the text. This chapter lays out the overall design of Prov 1–9, demonstrating how Prov 1–7 should be treated in a holistic manner and how the structure and reading in Prov 1–7 should continue and climax into Prov 8–9.

Chapter 6 deals with the persuasive dimension, particularly with the stylistic elements, the speaker's ethos, the listener's pathos and imagery devices. This chapter supplements the macroscopic perspective (structure and content). Without these microscopic evidences, the inner logic of the text is less convincing.

Chapter 7 presents the conclusions of this study based on all that has gone before. The thesis that the father's rhetoric in Prov 1–7 continues and climaxes into Prov 8–9 will be confirmed.

CHAPTER TWO

SECONDARY LITERATURE REGARDING FORM–REDACTIONAL CRITICISM AND FEMINIST CRITICISM

The structure and reading in Prov 1–9 provide a staging ground for different methods to lay out their theories either to support or to oppose the unity of the text. In particular, the various features of language in these chapters are studied in either a diachronic or synchronic manner, and result in different interpretations when different methods are used. Can there be a unifying rhetoric in these chapters? How is the block of Prov 8–9 related to Prov 1–7? How are the discontinuities (e.g., 1:20–33; 4:1–9; 6:1–19; chs. 8–9) interpreted? While this study assumes that the father's rhetoric in Prov 1–7 continues and climaxes in Prov 8–9, thus supporting the unity of Prov 1–9, the two major competing approaches, redactional criticism and feminist criticism, use very different approaches.

This chapter first discusses form–redactional criticism,[1] defined as "a method of biblical study which examines the intentions of the editors or redactors who compiled the biblical texts out of earlier source materials." This critical method seeks to provide a logical interpretation to the formation of the text in Prov 1–9. The structure and reading in Prov 1–9 appear inconsistent and discontinuous in the light of form–redactional

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[1] Instead of the term "redactional," this author prefer the term "form–redactional" to encircle the redactional effort based on form method. John Barton defines redaction criticism this way: "Redaction criticism is a method of biblical study which examines the intentions of the editors or redactors who compiled the biblical texts out of earlier source materials. It thus presupposes the results of source and form criticism, and builds upon them." *ABD* 5:644. This definition is what I mean by the term "form–redactional criticism."

efforts.

Form–Redactional Criticism

This section discusses the way form–redactional critics conclude that there is a

fundamental disunity in Prov 1–9. It shines the spotlight on McKane's and Whybray's

form–redactional theories. By focusing on the disunity and discontinuity of the text, these

two critics deny any unifying arrangement existing in Prov 1–7 and 8–9. Before

discussing their theories, it is necessary to know some background concerning form–

redactional criticism.

Form Criticism as Background

The issue of form or genre, the major concern of form criticism, gained the

attention of biblical scholars as early as the nineteenth century.[2] Later O. Eissfeldt also

observed the advantages of this approach.[3] For these earlier scholars (e.g., Delitzsch and

Eissfeldt), the categorization of various genres is necessary in approaching Prov 1–9

although they did not find an organized system in the text.

The study of Prov 1–9 was not greatly affected by form criticism until the work of

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[2] During the nineteenth century, Delitzsch found fifteen *Mashal* strains in Prov 1–9 (מָשָׁל= proverb), twelve for the speaking teacher (father) in 1:8–19; 2:1–22; 3:1–18, 19–26, 27–35; 4:1–5:6; 5:7–23; 6:1–5, 6–11, 12–19, 20–35; 7:1–27 and three for wisdom in 1:20–33; 8:1–36; 9:1–18. Delitzsch postulated that the nature of these fifteen pieces is introductory–pedagogic and "the rhetorical form here outweighs the purely poetical"; in fact, "there is exceedingly little of the technical form of the *Mashal*, as well as generally of technical form at all." Franz Delitzsch, *Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1975), 12–14. Delitzsch considers that the fifteen discourses "are neither of a symmetrically chiseled form nor of internally fashioned coherence, but yet are a garland of songs having internal unity, with a well–arranged manifoldness of contents" (14).

[3] Eissfeldt made a distinction between *Volkssprichwort* (the popular proverb) and the *Kunstspruch* (artistic wisdom saying) in the Book of Proverbs. His categorization is based on a form perspective. Otto Eissfeldt, *Der Maschal im Alten Testament. Ein wotgeschichtliche Untersuchung der genannten Gattungen "Volkssprichwort" und "Spottlied"* (BZAW 24, Giessen: A. Topelmann, 1913), 2–4 and also 43. Also see the discussion in R. N. Whybray, *The Book of Proverbs*, 4.

Hermann Gunkel, his book *The Psalms*.[4] Gunkel viewed the Book of Psalms against its

ANE (ancient Near East) literary background,[5] encouraging a new perspective from

which to interpret Prov 1–9, in particular the figure of Wisdom. As Clifford indicates:

> Prior to Gunkel, personified Wisdom had been of interest chiefly to
> philosophers and ethicists. Parallels to Wisdom, when they were sought,
> tended to be from the Hellenistic world. Research since Gunkel can be
> summarized under four headings: (1) Wisdom as a hypostasis of Yahweh; (2)
> Wisdom as a Syro–Palestinian or Egyptian goddess; (3) Wisdom as the
> Mesopotamian divine or semidivine *ummānu*; (4) Wisdom as a pure literary
> personification.[6]

Gunkel's influence resulted in two directions in the form study of Prov 1–9: (1) the study

of structure (e.g., Skehan[7]) and (2) the study of the cross–cultural commonality and

similarities between of Prov 1–9 and other ancient literatures (e.g. Kayatz[8] and Lang[9]).

Following in the footsteps of these form investigations are the scholars who

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[4] Herman Gunkel, *Die Psalmen* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1926), translated into English: *The Psalms: A Form–Critical Introduction*, by Thomas M. Horner in 1967. Also see the relevant discussion in John Barton, *Reading the Old Testament* (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1984), 33–8.

[5] See the summary in Gerlinde Baumann, *Die Weisheitsgestalt in Proverbien 1–9* (FAT 16; Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1996), 1–57; Roland E. Murphy, "The Personification of Wisdom," in *Wisdom in Ancient Israel* (ed. John Day et al.; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 222–33, and M. V. Fox, "Ideas of Wisdom in Proverbs 1–9," *JBL* 116 (1997): 613–33.

[6] Richard J. Clifford, *Proverbs* (OTL; Louisville, Ky.: John Knox, 1999), 23.

[7] Skehan's theory is based on Prov 9:1, "Wisdom has built her house, she has hewn out her seven pillars (עַמּוּדֶיהָ שִׁבְעָה)." Skehan sees Prov 1 and 8–9 as a framework and Prov 2–7 as composed of seven poems (the seven columns). See the theory in Patrick W. Skehan, "The Seven Columns of Wisdom's House in Proverbs 1–9," 190–98; also cf. "A Single Editor for the Whole Book of Proverbs," 115–30; "Wisdom's House," 162–180; and *Studies in Israelite Poetry and Wisdom*, 1–14.

[8] Kayatz studied the differences and similarities between the Egyptian instruction documents and Prov 1–9 with regard to form/genre. Disagreeing with the assumptions of the post–exilic origin of Prov 1–9, she considers the Egyptian connection of Prov 1–9 which is able to date the text as early as the pre–exilic age. Some Egyptian Instructions, according to Kayatz, have resemblances to the prologue of Prov 1:1–6, and the Egyptian goddess *Maat* is related to personified Wisdom. Kayatz, *Studien zu Proverbien 1–9*, 13–4 and 93–119. Also see the relevant discussion in K. A. Kitchen, "Some Egyptian Background to the Old Testament," *TB* 5/6 (1960): 4–18.

[9] Instead of the Egyptian goddess *Maat*, B. Lang, another form critic, proposes that the personified Wisdom who speaks in three *Lehrgedichte* (didactic poems) in Prov 1:20–33, 8, and 9:1–6, is an Israelite goddess. See Bernhard Lang, *Wisdom and the Book of Proverbs: An Israelite Goddess Redefined* (New York: Pilgrim, 1986), 57–70; also cf. his *Frau Weisheit. Deutung einer biblischen Gestalt* (Düsseldorf: Patmos–Verlag, 1975) 57–111, and 74–85.

illustrate the process of textual formation in Prov 1–9 by questioning the existence of

unity in the text, including W. McKane, R. N. Whybray, R. B. Y. Scott and C.

Westermann.[10] These scholars deny any overarching arrangement including Prov 1–7 and

8–9. In fact, this denial is based on the redactional assumption that the father–son

discourses (Prov1–7) are not a product of the same time as the wisdom materials (Prov 8–

9). Among these scholars, McKane's Yahwistic reinterpretation of Prov 1–9 and

Whybray's theory of the ten fatherly discourses illustrate how the form–redactional

endeavors come to this conclusion.

McKane and the Yahwistic Reinterpretation

McKane recognizes the international nature of the instruction (discourse) genre in

Prov 1–9 as an accumulated result of simpler forms.[11] Proverbs 1–9, according to

McKane, was nurtured in the Ancient Near East surroundings (Egyptian and Babylonian–

Assyrian), and experienced a process of Yahwistic reinterpretation, that is, a redaction

based on Yahwistic piety. As McKane indicates,

> My account of this section (Prov 1–9) will reveal an unevenness of content in
> those parts which are strictly Instruction. Most inculcate earthy and hard–
> headed wisdom and have nothing in them that would stamp them as
> distinctively Israelite, certainly not as Yahwistic (1.8–19; 4; 5; 6.1–5, 20–35;
> 7.1–5, 24–27; also 31.1–9). In a few places, the Instruction has been brought
> into the fold of Yahwistic piety and retains no recognizable contract its
> primary educational *Sitz* (3.1–12, 21–26, 31–35). There are one or two
> passages which are concerned particularly with anti–social behaviour (3.27–

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[10] See Scott's relevant works in R. B. Y. Scott, "Wise and Foolish, Righteous and Wicked," in *Studies in the Religion of Ancient Israel* (VTSup 23, ed. G. W. Anderson, Leiden: Brill, 1972) and *Proverbs, Ecclesiastes* (AB 18, New York: Doubleday, 1965); and Westermann's relevant work in Claus Westermann. *Forschungsgeschichte zur Weisheitsliteratur 1950–1990* (AT 71; Stuttgart: Calwer Verlag, 1991). Also see the main and relevant works of McKane and Whybray in the following section.

[11] McKane postulates that "Prov 1–9 is largely made up of: (a) pieces which are strictly Instruction (1.8–19; 3.1–12, 21–35; 4; 5; 6.1–5, 20–35; 7.1–5, 24–27); (b) those in which there is a development and slackening of the formal structure of the Instruction (2; 3.13–20; 6.6–11; 7.6–23)." McKane, *Proverbs*, 7.

30; 4.14f; also 6.12 which is not Instruction) and so the three classes of material which appear in the sentence literature are also present in 1–9. [12]

This form–redactional perspective appears to deny the possibility of an original and intentional unity.

In order to interpret Prov 8–9, McKane employs an empirical treatment of wisdom's effectiveness,[13] which he uses to describe how personified Wisdom is involved in practical life and plays an effective and significant role. For instance, when McKane investigates Prov 8, he mentions that "The emphasis in this chapter [chapter 8] is still on the empirical evidences of Wisdom's effectiveness, on her earthiness and her full involvement in worldly affairs."[14] Based on the effectiveness of wisdom teaching, Prov 9:7–12 "certainly indicate[s] that there are types of men who are incorrigible and that the wisdom teacher should concentrate efforts on those who are receptive to wisdom and disposed towards it (vv.7–9)."[15] Besides, "the fear of Yahweh" (1:8; 9:10) is explained as "not an original constituent of wisdom" but rather as "the new *mūsā*, and its promulgation is associated with a shift of emphasis from education to piety, from submission to the discipline imposed by a wisdom teacher to reverence for Yahweh."[16] This Yahwistic reinterpretation reflects the assumption that in the text there are different

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[12] Ibid., 8.

[13] The so–called "empirical treatment of wisdom effectiveness" is to interpret the figure of wisdom (personified Wisdom) with the experiential viewpoint of human life and to observe what kind of effectiveness it can arouse in practical life.

[14] Ibid., 343. For a further explanation McKane emphasizes: "It is worth noting that Wisdom begins with this assertion of her pre–eminence as a counselor of kings and giver of success in the world, and then proceeds to expatiate on the status which she derives from her primeval antiquity (vv. 22–31). It is reasonable to attach some significance to this order, since it is the reverse of what might naturally be expected. Wisdom's dwelling with God before the world and men were created would have lent perspective and sanction to her claim to dwell with shrewdness and to dominate politics and practical affairs in a this–worldly context." Ibid.

[15] Ibid., 368.

[16] Ibid., 368. Also see W. McKane, *Prophets and Wise Man* (SBT 44, Naperville, Ill.: Alec R. Allenson, 1965), 48–54.

layers, in which the later one (Yahwistic reinterpretation) provides explanation to the earlier one (old wisdom).

McKane usually assumes a questioning posture concerning the continuity of the text in order to fit the text into his reinterpretation theory. For instance, because he insists on the this–worldly wisdom that people have,[17] he questions the place of Prov 2:5 and considers this verse "somewhat inconsequential and unconvincing."[18] The reason that the verse appears in this place is not only for the purpose of reinterpretation but also for an *ad hoc* adjustment to v. 6 and the succeeding verses. The original context (old wisdom) which 2:5 belongs to was in process of development and loosening of the formal structure of instruction.[19] This kind of Yahwistic reinterpretation, or prophetic reinterpretation in MaKane's description,[20] reflects his doubting attitude toward the continuity that he thinks non–existent in the text.

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[17] When McKane approaches Prov 9:7–12, he states: "Finally, there is the conviction that wisdom is an inalienable possession. It is part of the man who has it; it makes him what he is and no man can take it away from him. In this sense he is responsible for his wisdom and has full disposal of it. And the same is true of the person who has intellectual pride. This is an attitude which is constitutive of him in the most inward characteristics of his selfhood. He has become this kind of man through his own obdurate pride in the most private sector of his life and it is there in his loneliness that he must endure the consequences his personality as they work them themselves out inexorably (v.12)." Ibid., 369. Here wisdom obviously becomes a kind of human nature without a need of divine or other–worldly contribution (cf. 1:7; 3:19–20; 8:22–31; 9:10).

[18] Ibid., 281. In a conditional relationship, Prov 2:5 is thought to be apodosis to those protases in 2:1–4. According to McKane, "Even so, it has to be admitted that the apodosis (v.5) is somewhat inconsequential and unconvincing. The words *'āz tābīn yir'at* at *YHWH* are something of a *tour de force* in relation to such items of vocabulary in the protases as *hokmā, tebūnā, bīnā,* and when v. 5 is reached the reader becomes aware that the sense of the preceding verses has been given a sudden and quite violent twist. One goes along happily supposing that a wisdom teacher is using the vocabulary of old wisdom and that *hokmā* and *tebūnā* are mental virtues of sagacity and penetration, inculcated by an educational process which addressed itself to the right shaping and maturing of intellectual attitudes. This supposition is no longer tenable once v. 5 is reached, for there it becomes clear that the vocabulary in the protases cannot be located in the frame of old wisdom with its pragmatic bent and ethical neutrality. One has then to speak of a reinterpretation of the vocabulary of old wisdom, but the reinterpretation in v. 5 has much more the appearance of an *ad hoc* adjustment than of a considered reinterpretation. The seam between the original sense of the vocabulary in the protases and the reinterpretation imposed by v. 5 is clearly visible." Ibid. Also see McKane's relevant theory in W. McKane, *Prophets and Wise Man*, 65–78.

[19] McKane, *Proverbs*, 7.

[20] See McKane, *Prophets and Wise Men*, 65–78 and cf. 79–93.

Under the influence of McKane, the form–redactional perspective became influential among scholars. Scott considers Prov 1–9 (the Book of Proverbs) "an accumulation of variegated materials old and new, apparently assembled for use as a source–book in a school for youth,"[21] and denies an intentional/holistic perspective in Prov1–9.[22] Following McKane's argument that longer units developed from shorter ones, Westermann postulates his own reconstruction. That is, the shorter sentence literature was earlier and originated in an oral context and the more complex instructional literature (Prov 1–9) originated at a later cultural stage at the court or in schools and doesn't have an organized system.[23] These concepts by their nature assume that unity does not exist in the text.

To summarize, McKane's efforts start with the analysis of forms, particularly in comparison to the ANE manuscripts and religions, and end up with a redactional sequence. His interpretation of the discontinuity of the text leads to a denial of a holistic arrangement in Prov 1–9. In this form–redactional method, a unifying perspective is impossible to find in the original text; in other words, the fatherly discourses in Prov 1–7 do not continue into the wisdom materials in Prov 8–9.

Whybray and the Ten Fatherly Instructions

Whybray has written many essays and monographs to strengthen and/or modify his

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[21] Scott, "Wise and Foolish, Righteous and Wicked," 146.

[22] Scott thought the wisdom materials in Proverbs are widely divergent in literary form, viewpoint and thought content, specially "in the two sections entitled 'Proverbs of Solomon'—in an almost *haphazard* arrangement" (italic mine). Ibid, and also see 146–165. In this perspective, an intentional and holistic composition doesn't exist in the text. Prov 1–9, according to Scott, "has suffered some disturbance, possibly in the production of later editions by the original author, and doubtless also from the vicissitudes of subsequent manuscript transmission." Scott, *Proverbs, Ecclesiastes*, 16.

[23] See Westermann, *Forschungsgeschichte*, 17. Also see the relevant discussion in Knut M. Heim, *Like Grapes of Gold Set in Silver: An Interpretation of Proverbial Clusters in Proverbs 10:1–22:16* (BZAW 273; Berlin; New York: Walter de Gruyter, 2001), 11–5.

original views found in his work, *Wisdom in Proverbs: The Concept of Wisdom in Proverbs 1–9*,[24] a landmark in the study of Prov 1–9. This book primarily discusses the nature and purpose of personified Wisdom in Prov 1:20–33, 8:1–35 and 9:1–6, and also introduces the ideas of the ten fatherly instructions (discourses): I. I. 1:8–19; II. 2:1–22; III. 3:1–12; IV. 3:21–35; V. 4:1–9; VI. 4:10–19; VII. 4:20–27; VIII. 5:1–23; IX. 6:20–35; IX. 7:1–27.[25] There are six common features that identify the ten fatherly instructions:

> (1) they (these discourses) are all addressed to "my son" ("sons" in 4.1) in the first or second word; (2) they all command the pupil to "hear," "receive," "not forget," and so on, the instruction which follows (a conditional form is used in 2.1); (3) they all assert the personal authority of the speaker—the "father" or teacher; (4) they all assert or imply the great value and usefulness of the father's words; (5) there is no reference to any authority beyond that of the father himself ('God and man' in 3.4 is merely a set phrase indicating universality); (6) the word "wisdom," which occurs only twice (5.1; 4.11), here means ordinary human wisdom and is not treated—in contrast to its use elsewhere in these chapters—as a word of special significance.[26]

The ten fatherly instructions are considered the original core of Prov 1–9 and a textbook used to teach young pupils in a school setting.[27] Building his form–redactional

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[24] R. N. Whybray, *Wisdom in Proverbs: the Concept of Wisdom in Proverbs 1–9* (SBT 45, Chatham, Great Britain: SCM Press, 1965). Also see R. N. Whybray, "Some Literary Problems in Proverbs 1–9," *VT* 16 (1966): 482–96; *Wealth and Poverty in the Book of Proverbs* (JSOTSup 99; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1990); *The Composition of the Book of Proverbs* (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1994); and "City Life in Proverbs 1–9," in *"Jedes Ding Has Seine Zeit" Studien zur Israelitischen und Altorientalischen Weisheit* (ed. Anja A. Diesel, Reinhard G. Lehmann, Eckart Otto and Andreas Wagner; Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1996), 243–50.

[25] See also Whybray, *The Composition of the Book of Proverbs*, 11–61, and *Proverbs*, 15–20.

[26] See Whybray, *Composition of the Book of Proverbs*, 13; *Proverbs*, 15–20; and *Wisdom in Proverbs*, 33–52. See also the different or modified categorizations in Andrew E. Steinmann, *Proverbs* (St. Louis: Concordia, forthcoming), 62–183. One of the major ideas for the modification is the initial marker. The initial vocative in Whybray's fifth fatherly discourse (4:1–9) is plural in number (בָּנִים [sons] in 4:1) and considered not to correspond to the rest (בְּנִי [my son] in 2:1; 3:1; 3:21; 4:10, 20; 5:1; 6:1, 20; 7:1).

[27] Whybray has postulated the speech–giver as a teacher within a school setting in his several works: Whybray, *Wisdom in Proverbs*, 7, 19, and 33–71; *The Composition of the Book of Proverbs*, 27; *The Intellectual Tradition in the Old Testament*, 32–43; and "The Sage in the Israelite Royal Court" in *The Sage in Israel and the Ancient Near East* (ed. J. G. Gammie and L. G. Perdue, Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1990), 133–139. This school–origin theory is also supported by Crenshaw, *Education in Ancient Israel*; Estes, *Hear, My Son*. The opposite opinion (family–origin theory) is also supported by Horne, *Proverbs–Ecclesiastes*, 10; Gilbert, "Le Discours de la Sagesse en Proverbs, 8. Structure et cohérence," 202–18. See

hypothesis,[28] Whybray suggests that the wisdom poems (Prov 1:20–33, 3:13–20, 8:1–36),

the prologue (Prov 1:1–7), and the epilogue (Prov 9:1–12) are secondary additions to the

ten instructions.[29] Whybray states that

> We may conclude that there has been no systematic attempt to add a pious or
> 'theological' note to teaching which was originally given on the sole
> authority of a human teacher. Each instruction has its own character as an
> independent piece. In the three cases mentioned above, it is true that a
> redactor has thought it necessary to insert a reminder that, despite the
> apparently absolute claims by the teacher for the effectiveness of his teaching
> provided that it is heeded, his authority is in fact subject to that of Yahweh
> and the ultimately it is Yahweh who is in control of human lives. This does
> not, however, necessarily mean that the original instructions are to be
> regarded as 'secular' or as setting up a human authority about that of God.[30]

Whybray's form–redactional hypothesis also assumes that the original instructions

(discourses) were in a short form (5–12 couplets) before the redactional process started.

For instance, Whybray considers that the ninth instruction composed of thirty–three cola

(Prov 6:20–35) came from no more than thirteen original cola (6:20–22, 24–25, 32), and

probably from only eight cola (6:20–21, 24–25).[31]

Whybray's theory creates a strong challenge to the holistic perspective of the

original text as he finds "no logical arrangement or structure in these chapters."[32]

According to Whybray, upon the core of the ten fatherly instructions "the wisdom–

additions and Yahweh–additions had not been added systematically: some of the

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also the discussion in Whybray, *The Book of Proverbs*, 67–8; and Murphy, *The Tree of Life*, 4.

[28] According to Whybray's from–redactional hypothesis, to those original fatherly discourses were added the wisdom additions and the Yahweh additions. See Whybray, *The Composition of the Book of Proverbs*, 29–32.

[29] Ibid., 72–4, and also 29–56.

[30] Ibid., 31.

[31] Ibid., 48–9.

[32] Whybray, *The Book of Proverbs*, 70. Longman also supports the idea of an unsystematic structure. Longman, *Proverbs*, 36–42. For the opposite opinion see Bruce K. Walke, *The Book of Proverbs Chapters 1–15*, 9–13; Otto Plöger, *Sprüche Salomos (Proverbia)* (Neukirchen–Vluyn: Neukirchner Verlage, 1984), 23–4; and Fox, *Proverbs 1–9*, 322–4 and also 44–9.

Instructions had received no such additions, others either Yahweh–additions or wisdom–additions or both."[33] So–called "additions" means non–original materials. In the other words, there was no holistic arrangement in the original text.

Whybray's categorization of the ten fatherly instructions also excludes the didactic collection of Prov 6:1–19, which also begins with the vocative "my son" (בְּנִי in 6:1; cf. 2:1; 3:1; 3:21; 4:10, 20; 5:1; 6:1, 20; 7:1) but falls short of the rest of the features that most fatherly instructions have. The irregular form of Prov 6:1–19 (without imperatives and short of vocatives, motivation or *conclusio*) does cause confusion, as Whybray notes:

> The material in these verses differs both in form and substance form that by which is surrounded.... It is not clear why this material should have been placed there between two Instructions. It may perhaps be regarded as a continuation of the immediately preceding miscellaneous collection of wisdom sayings in 5:21–3. Whether it once existed as an independent collection before its insertion here is uncertain.[34]

Following Whybray, McKane also observes, "That 6.1–19 is a later insertion cannot really be shown by the argument that in its absence there would be a thematic continuity between 5.23 and 6.20 (cf. Gemser), for the *'iššā zārā* (strange woman) is a recurrent subject in chapters 1–9 (2, 5, 6, 7, 9), and if it can be reintroduced after interruptions in these other places, there is not a strong case for demanding continuity between 5.23 and 6.20."[35]

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[33] Whybray, *The Book of Proverbs*, 70.

[34] Whybray, *Proverbs*, 93. Garret treats this vocative "my son" like a division marker, and excludes the section of Prov 6:1–19 from the ten paternal exhortations because "it lacks a distinctive characteristic of the paternal appeal, the plea for the son to heed the father's words. Also, unlike the paternal exhortation this section has no thematic unity. Each of the four teachings is discrete (vv. 1–5, 6–11, 12–15, 16–19)." Duane A. Garrett, *Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs* (NAC 14; Nashville, Tennessee: Broadman Press, 1993), 95.

[35] McKane, *Proverbs*, 320. Compared to the other fatherly discourses, the form of 6:1–19 "is hardly consistent with either parental or scholastic instruction, for there is a significant difference between a 'My son' address, which warns against sloth, and an 'O sluggard' address, which is directed against one confirmed in habits of slothfulness. It is difficult to believe that this would be a normal presupposition in

Fox follows Whybray's and McKane's strategy and doesn't pay attention to the existence of a special rhetoric (the father's rhetoric) in the composition of the entire text; thus he cannot find the rhetorical intention in the text.[36] Taking an opposing view, Scott Harris postulates a unity in Prov 1–9 and deliberates the editorial placement of Prov 6:1–19, which is a special effect in the context.[37] In fact, Harris as well as some other scholars[38] who consider a special rhetoric working in the discourses (notice the vocative בְּנִי in Prov 6:1), use a perspective different from the form–redactional approach. Indeed the existence of Prov 6:1–19 presents a discontinuity in the text, prompting form–redactional critics to confirm their denial of unity in the text.

Whybray's hypothesis categorizes the present text into several layers from different ages, disregarding the possibility of a literary unity.[39] His theory on the ten fatherly

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either parental or scholastic instruction." Ibid.

[36] Fox is successful in finding two pairs of epigrams in Prov 6:1–19 but fails to fit the message within its context. According to Fox's categorization of Prov 6:1–19, the first two epigrams (Epigram i: Loan Guarantees [vv. 1–5]; Epigram ii: Sloth and Industry [vv. 6–11]) are about folly and the last two epigrams (Epigram iii: The Good–for–Nothing [vv. 12–15]; Epigram iv: What the Lord Loathes) are concerning evil. Fox, *Proverbs 1–9*, 210–225. Fox, as other scholars (McKane, Toy, and so on), fails to read the message in the context. Fox says that "Interlude C (Prov 6:1–19) is *not* an original component of Part I (Prov 1–9). Its structure is very different from that of the lectures (discourses), which begin with an exordium calling for the son's attention, they proceed to give counsel in the lesson, and then (usually) conclude with a summary proverb." Ibid., 225.

[37] Ibid., 111–134. Harris' argument insists that the continuity of Prov 6:1–19 lies in skillful use of the Joseph story as the background of the text. See Scott L. Harris, *Proverbs 1–9: A Study of Inner–Biblical Interpretation* (SBLDS 150, Atlanta, Ga.: Scholars Press, 1995), 111–34.

[38] For instances, Waltke considers the section of Prov 6:1–19 as the appendix of the preceding fatherly discourse. See Waltke, *The Book of Proverbs Chapter 1–15*, 11; also cf. 325–348; Horne supports Waltke's idea by suggesting that "the verses contained in this unit reflect a change in thematic content as well as an abandonment of the typical introductory appeal we have seen up to this point in chapters 1–9 of Proverbs....The variation in style here, where the origins and dating of the materials, still allows useful thematic connections with the preceding parental assertion of the foolishness of sexual impropriety in chapter 5." Horne, *Proverbs–Ecclesiastes*, 101.

[39] This can be known simply from the preface of his book, in which he says, "The main thesis of the book is that these chapters (Prov 1–9) are *not a literary unity* expressing a single concept of wisdom, but consist of an original lesson–book designed for use in scribal schools and closely modeled on Egyptian prototypes, to which later writers have added interpretative material with the intention of bring its teaching more closely into conformity with Israelite religious beliefs: it is in this additional material that wisdom appears, having been developed as a means to this end." (italic and parenthesis mine) Whybray, *Wisdom in*

instructions reveals both a continuity (the commonality in the fatherly instructions) and a discontinuity (4:1–9 is kept in but 6:1–19 is excised) in the text. The similarity of ancient Egyptian manuscripts to Prov 1–9 plays a significant role as Whybray develops his form–redactional theory.

Summary

Form–redactional criticism denies a unifying perspective/rhetoric and does not see the apparent discontinuities as part of the original text (e.g., 2:5; 6:1–19; chs. 8–9). Therefore it assumes that the text must have experienced a process of redaction to some degree. McKane's Yahwistic reinterpretation illustrates this. Whybray notices the continuity in Prov 1–7 and builds his theory on the ten father's instructions (discourses) but has to exclude the obvious discontinuities, particularly the block of Prov 8–9. A literary/rhetorical unity is not possible to defend using this method since primary assumptions of form–redactional are a discontinuity in the text and existence of a number of sources behind the text that the final redactor could not or would not weave into a coherently unified whole. Given these assumptions, form–redactional criticism ends up asserting as its conclusions what it assumes from the start. James Muilenburg acknowledged the benefits of this method (form/form–redactional criticism), but also delineated its inadequacies (e.g., the dismissal of the unique features of a text because of inordinate stress upon typical and representative features).[40] Thus, he appealed for a step beyond form (form–redactional) criticism, a step he called "rhetorical criticism," i.e. a careful literary study of the compositional features of the text.

Proverbs, 7.

[40] James Muilenburg, "Form Criticism and Beyond." *JBL* 88 (1969): 1–18.

Feminist Criticism

Feminist criticism is defined as "a hermeneutics as the theoretical exploration of biblical interpretation in the interest of woman."[41] Feminists claim a special insight into the text of Prov 1–9 due to their emphasis on female imagery. Through this criticism, the structure and reading of Prov 1–9 appears to have unity, but a unity in favor of female perspective/rhetoric.

Differing from diachronic methods, feminist criticism uses a holistic perspective in approaching Prov 1–9. The gap between the fatherly discourses (Prov 1–7) and the wisdom poems (Prov 8–9) are filled as this method provides new insight to explain the discontinuity in the text. In fact, this method provides an advantageous discussion regarding the issue of gender. The feminists' approach reflects their concern regarding masculine supremacy in biblical study, particularly in Prov 1–9, and seeks to break through androcentric ideology.[42] This study uses Brenner's and Camp's theories as the examples to illustrate how feminist interpretation approaches the text in Prov 1–9.

Brenner and the F Voice

Using Hegelian thought, Athalya Brenner investigates the female figurations in Prov 1–9 when she distinguishes the M (male) and the F (female) voices in the text. She indicates, "I adopt the Hegelian position that stipulates that, within the pattern of master–slave dynamics, collaboration with and defense of the dominant (M voice) socio–ethical

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[41] Elisabeth S. Fiorenza, "Feminist Criticism," *ABD* 2:784. Fiorenza states: "Although there are diverse articulations of feminism, feminists generally agree in their critique of masculine supremacy and hold that gender roles are socially constructed rather than innate. The 'root experience' of feminism is women's realization that cultural 'common sense,' dominant perspectives, scientific theories, and historical knowledge are androcentric, i. e., male–biased, and therefore not objective but ideological. This breakthrough experience causes not only disillusionment and anger but also a sense of possibility and power." Ibid.

[42] Ibid.

ideology is often undertaken by the inferior partner (F voice) even when it is not beneficial for the latter. F voices can be as critical of their own kind as–and conceivably even more so than–M voices emanating from a text."[43] Using the mother's instruction in Prov 31, Brenner sets the tone for the reading of Prov 1–9,[44] intending to cover the entire Prov 1–9 in a mother's voice (F voice).[45] This effort illustrates how a feminist viewpoint neutralizes gender for the benefit of a specific exegesis and operates with a special hermeneutics for the text.

Brenner adopts Goitein's opinion[46] and considers the voice behind Prov 5–7 the voice of a female rebuker. She explains:

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[43] Athalya Brenner, "Figurations of Woman in Wisdom Literature," *A Feminist Companion to Wisdom Literature* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1995), 52. See also Brenner, *On Gendering Texts: Female and Male Voices in the Hebrew Bible* (Athalya Brenner and Fokkelien Van Dijk–Hemmes, eds; Leiden; New York: Brill, 1993), 113–130 and *A Feminist Companion to Reading the Bible: Approaches, Methods and Strategies* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1997).

[44] Brenner adopts Camp's theory and indicates: "My proposed reading of Proverbs 1–9 and the F voices which inform, or are submerged within, it is concluded by referring once more to chapter 31, the other side of the F frame of the whole of the whole Proverbs collection.... At any rate, at the end of Proverbs we are reminded of the mother's instruction to son genre operative in the first part of the Book (Prov 1–9)." Athalya Brenner, "Proverbs 1–9: An F Voice?" in Brenner, *On Gendering Texts: Female and Male Voices in the Hebrew Bible*, 127. See also Camp, *Wisdom and the Feminine in the Book of Proverbs*, 207.

[45] In the Brenner's introduction to *On Gendering Texts: Female and Male Voices in the Hebrew Bible*, she says that "Brenner's reading reverses the tables. She asks, Can we read Proverbs 1–9 as a text in which a mother's voice, rather than a father's, occupies the central and privileged position of the speaking subject? Such a possibility seems worth exploring since (as Camp acutely observes) Proverbs is doubly framed at both ends by literary F figures–personified Wisdom together with her antitheses, the 'strange' woman, and personified Folly, in the first collection; Lemuel's mother's instructions and the Worthy Woman (*'ešet hayil*) poem at the end of the Book (chapters 31). Brenner shows that the recognition, through F reading, of an F voice in these passages is helpful for dealing with their problematics, one of which is the superabundance of F discourses within an assumed M discourse." Brenner, "Introduction" in *On Gendering Texts*, 11. Brenner emphasizes: "My project in this study is to reassess Goitein's notion of the Female Rebuker genre and reapply it to the Book of Proverbs, especially to Prov 1–9. By so doing I shall build upon van Dijk–Mermmes's treatment of the same issues (I.3.A–B above) and develop it further. Van Kijk–Mermmes diagnoses women's voices and F personas–in–the–text; I would like to show that Proverbs 1–9 can actually be read not only as a repository of quoted F voices but, rather, as an F text." Ibid., 113–4.

[46] Goitein considers it possible that the warnings against the temptations of the strange women in Prov 5–7 and against the drinking of wine made up part of the repertory of the Hebrew *female* rebuker. See S. D. Goitein, "Woman as Creators of Biblical Genres," *Proof* (1988) 8: 1–33; also see Solomon D. Goitein, *Iyyunim Bammiqra* (Tel Aviv: Yavneh Press, 1957), 248–317. Also see the relevant discussion in Brenner, *On Gendering Texts*, 57–62 and 113–4.

It is generally accepted that the I persona speaking in Proverbs 1–9 is that of
a wisdom teacher who speaks to his student son or sons like a father does. I
have, however, shown above that in Proverbs texts delivered by the I persona
are characterized not only as 'the command of your father' (*mswt 'byk*), but
also as 'the instruction of your mother' (*twrt 'mmk*) (see Prov 1.8 and 6.20).
The speaker in certain parts of Proverbs 1–9 could therefore be a woman, a
teacher of wisdom or female 'rebuker' who exhorts her son, thus exercising
her prerogative as a mother. In my opinion the hypothesis of a female speaker
is *unavoidable*, particularly so in view of Proverbs 7.[47]

According to Brenner, looking through the window (7:6) "is an activity that is mostly
practiced by women."[48] She uses Michal (2 Sam. 6:6), Jezebel (2 Kings 9:30) and Sisera's
mother (Judg. 5:28) to illustrate her interpretation and to explain a traditional image/motif
behind this art.[49] The readers of Prov 7, whom are addressed by the term "sons" in 7:24,
become not only male but also *female* in particular.[50]

Brenner emphasizes the female voice in Prov 1–9, demonstrating the interest in a
holistic arrangement of the text. In the Book of Proverbs, especially Prov 1–9, there are
supports for feminist theories such as the virtuous woman at the ending (Prov 31:10–31),
the female models (personified Wisdom, see 1:20–31; 3:13–20; 8–9) and the negative
female contrasts (the strange woman and personified Folly, see 2:16–19; 5–7; 9:13–18).
The section of Prov 1–7 definitely continues into the section 8–9 according to this

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[47] Brenner, *On Gendering Textse*, 57 (italics mine).

[48] Ibid.

[49] Ibid. Brenner thinks the portrayal of "the woman at the window" is a frequent art motif in the ANE
world. She quotes Winter by explains that this art concerns "phönizische Elfenbeinreliefs, auf denen der
Kopf der Göttin bzw. Derjenige ihrer Repräsentantin über einer Balustrade in einer gerahmten Fester
erscheint." Ibid., 58. See also Urs Winter, *Frau und Göttin, Exegetische und ikonographische Studien zum
weiblichen Gottesbild im Alten Israel und in dessen Umwelt* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1983),
296.

[50] Ibid., 61–2. Brenner makes a further explanation: "The I persona sitting at the window can be
associated with certain intertexts. Those call to mind negatively presented biblical female figures such as
Michal, Jezebel and Sisera's mother. It is above all the last figure who is generally seen as a woman who is
brought into action against women. The sexual associations form a pointer for the male or female reader to
react with at least some skepticism to the view of the woman–at–the–window who speaks with such
'persuasiveness' in Proverbs 7." Ibid., 62.

feministic perspective, and the unity of Prov 1–9 is recognized using a female voice and female ideology.

Camp and the Mother's Imagery

Claudia V. Camp employs the image of mother to establish her theory of the unity of Prov 1–9. Unsatisfied with the treatment of female imagery by other scholars, Camp considers that "the question of the relationship between female Wisdom and wisdom recorded in the Proverbs collection remains unresolved."[51] Adopting a literary approach, she insists that the figure of personified Wisdom in Prov 1–9 "is not just any sort of literary figure, however, but specifically a *metaphor*, and can be analyzed as such."[52] This metaphorical approach is applied to the role of mother according to the text (see 1:8; 4:3; 6:20; also cf. 10:1; 15:20; 23:22, 25; 29:15; 30:17; 31:1).

Camp, like Brenner, also insists that the speaker of Prov 7 is a mother and the strange woman is "a mother's rival."[53] Camp makes a mother out of Lady Wisdom, seeing her as an equal educator to the father within the text.[54] The intention behind this

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[51] Camp, *Wisdom and the Feminine in the Book of Proverbs* (BLS 11; Sheffield: Almond, 1985), 12.

[52] Ibid., 13 (italics mine). Camp provides a further exposition by indicating: "The analysis of metaphor depends on discerning what philosopher Max Black calls the 'system of commonplaces' a given culture associates with the vehicle of the metaphor. The vehicle of the wisdom metaphor is 'woman.'" Ibid. In another place she also says that "One task of this book will be to show, through an analysis of the function of personified Wisdom as a metaphor within the present literary context and as a religious symbol within the Yahwistic symbol system, how this interrelationship of divine and human wisdom is brought about; and, further, how the present shape of the book of Proverbs both enhances our appreciation of this phenomenon and is, in turn, explicated by it." Ibid., 67.

[53] Claudia V. Camp, "The Strange Woman of Proverbs: A Study in the Feminization and Divinization of Evil in Biblical Thought," in *Women and Goddess Traditions in Antiquity and Today* (ed. Karen L. King; Minneapolis: Fortress, 1997), 310–329, and also 207. And also see the discussion in Hieke Heijermann, "Who Would Blame Her? The 'Strange' Woman of Proverbs 7," *A Feminist Companion to Wisdom Literature*, 104–6.

[54] Camp, *Wisdom and the Feminine in the Book of Proverbs*, 81–84. For instance, Camp indicates: "Given the book of Proverbs' characteristic stress on the correct functioning of society, it is perhaps not surprising that, where mother imagery occurs, the connotation is neither biological nor theological but rather educational. The mother's equality with the father in the handing down of wisdom is repeatedly emphasized by parallelism (1.8; 4.1–3; 6:20; 10:1; 15:20; 23.22–25). More striking is the reference in 31.1

approach is to make the female speaker (mother/Lady Wisdom) independent in the text.[55] Following the development of discourse in Prov 1–9, the independence of the female utterance helps to construct a consistency of the structure and reading.

According to Camp, "The collection itself (the Book of Proverbs), then, while it is useful for inculcating morality into school children, suffers a literary disability, and lacks coherence of both form and content."[56] Therefore Camp utilizes the repetition of female imagery (mother/personified Wisdom) to construct a unity for the Book of Proverbs[57] so that the diverse body of material results in a "unified"[58] and "coherent" whole.[59] To uphold this whole, Camp postulates female wisdom as "a religious symbol in the post–exilic period"[60] to make sense of a distant divinity because "the purpose of personified Wisdom was to re–unite this rupturing sense of reality into a unified cosmos."[61]

Above all, Camp's literary approach reflects the intention of finding a unifying rhetoric (female imagery) in approaching the text of Prov 1–9. Her focus on female imagery allows her to see Prov 1–9 (as well as the entire Book of Proverbs) as an integral whole. The gap that exists in between Prov 1–7 and 8–9 becomes insignificant and

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to the instruction of King Lemuel's mother." Ibid., 81–2.

[55] Debating with Camp, Newsom indicates: "in no way is she (mother) seen as constituting an independent voice, however, but serves as a confirmer of what is presented as essentially patriarchal authority." Carol A. Newsom, "Woman and the Discourse of Patriarchal Wisdom," *Gender and Difference in Ancient Israel* (ed. Peggy L. Day; Minneapolis: Fortress, 1989), 142–60.

[56] Camp, Wisdom and the Feminine in the Book of Proverbs, 207.

[57] Camp indicates: "The use of the poems in Prov 1–9 and 31 helps to remedy this situation in two ways. Stylistically, the repetition of female imagery in poetic form at the beginning and end of the collection creates literary framework that sets the boundaries of the book making it in Ricoeur's terms 'a finite and closed whole'." Ibid.

[58] Ibid., 208.

[59] Camp postulates that "the use of the stylistic device of personification augments meaning in a particular manner that aids the editor in crafting this material (the Book of Proverbs) into a coherent whole." Ibid., 209.

[60] Ibid., 227–31.

[61] Ibid., 230.

unnecessary in the light of this feminist perspective.

Summary

Feminist criticism bases its interpretation of Prov 1–9 on female–oriented concepts and establishes the continuity of the reading from Prov 1–7 into 8–9. Its synchronic viewpoint represents a new insight/ideology in looking at the text. Brenner's emphasis on F voice (and F text) in Prov 1–9 manifests the distinguishability among the genders (F and M voices); it also makes the F voice dominant over the text. Camp's metaphorical approach leads to the usage of female imagery to promote the mother's educational role (equal to father) so that a unity of the text can be achieved.

All of these feminist efforts are simplified into this statement: Prov 1–7 (the fatherly discourses) must be read in the light of Prov 8–9 (and also chapter 31), the wisdom materials, but not *vice versa*. However, if the text is read this way, the unifying perspective in Prov 1–9 becomes the female or mother's rhetoric, and the actual nuance of the *Sitz in Leben* (family) is lost. The chief speaker of the autobiographical/retrospective saying (4:4–9) and the vocatives (בְּנִי and בָּנִים) becomes a female, as does the King Solomon in the superscription (1:1).

Feminist criticism uses an incorrect unifying perspective/rhetoric to organize the text in Prov 1–9 and therefore draws a wrong picture. First, feminist critics assume that because feminine voices are a major feature of Prov 1–9, they are the dominant feature (incorrect leap of logic). Second, they assume that a feminine voice such as Lady Wisdom in Prov 8 must emanate from a feminine author and that no male author (such as a father) could make use of a feminine voice. Third, in light of the feminine figures employed in Prov 8–9, the reader will re–read the text of Prov 1–7 as coming from a

feminine voice. Not only is this an unproved assumption, it also ignores the fact of the clear and repeated masculine identification of the father's/Solomon's voice in Prov 1–7.

Chapter Summary

This study examines both form–redactional criticism (Mckane, Whybray and their followers) and feminist criticism (Brenner, Camp and their followers) as representatives, respectively, of diachronic and synchronic perspectives. The value of a diachronic research is that it seeks to recover the particularity of the text (form) and sees how the text is related to the cultural features of various ages (e.g., how the fatherly discourse is related to other Ancient Near East instructions). This method leads to both the unavailability of the text (the text is not reliable) and incoherency of the structure (the structure is unsystematic and scattered). Approaching the text and the structure from a different perspective, a synchronic approach (here represented by feminist criticism) deals with the text by appealing to what the text really is at present (treating the text as a literary work rather than a piece of archeological production), and by demonstrating the continuity in both the structure and reading of the text.

Thus form–redactional critics use genre to treat the various texts in Prov 1–9 differently regardless of the integrity of the text (which they consider non–existent). They also dismiss the unique features of this text because it presents inordinate stress upon typical and representative features. The feminists, however, are successful in emphasizing the literary or rhetorical features that the text really presents (female imagery). They bring a special perspective in the originality and actuality of the text in Prov 1–9 (i.e., the family life of ancient Israel), and emphasize the importance of dealing with the speaker's rhetoric regarding the discourses in the nine chapters. However, they

fail to recognize that this speaker's rhetoric is a father's rhetoric, thus missing the true meaning of the text. The fundamental difference between these two methods (form–redactional criticism and feminist criticism) reflects in their different approaches to the discontinuity that exists between Prov 1–7 and 8–9.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY: RHETORICAL CRITICISM

Chapter two discussed redactional criticism and feminist criticism. This chapter

introduces rhetorical criticism, including its ancient development and its situation in

current biblical studies. This chapter also presents how rhetorical critics approach the text

of Prov1–9 by using rhetorical criticism.

Rhetorical Criticism

Rhetorical criticism is defined as the study concerned with "the dynamics among

speaker, speech, and audience."[1] In order to investigate the "inner logic"[2] that exists in

the text, it is necessary to approach how every part of the text is set up and interpreted

through a rhetorical perspective, examining "the energy inherent in emotion and thought,

transmitted through a system of signs, including languages, to others to influence their

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[1] Vernon K. Robbins defines rhetorical criticism this way: "Rhetorical criticism is concerned especially with dynamics among speaker, speech, and audience. When applied to written literature, it focuses on implied authors; narrators and audiences enunciated in literature; and readers." See the entry "Form Criticism," Vernon K. Robbins, *ABD* 2:843. Rhetorical criticism also "considers a work of art chiefly as a means to an end, as a vehicle of communication and interaction between the author and the audience, and investigates the use of traditional devices to produce an effect in an audience." Benjamin Fiore, "Rhetoric and Rhetorical Criticism," Ibid., 5:716. Also cf. George A. Kennedy, *New Testament Interpretation through Rhetorical Criticism* (Chapel Hill/London: The University of North Carolina Press, 1984), 15. This method is beneficial to studying the unity and continuity of Prov 1–9 because, different from the short pithy apothegms in chapter10–29, these nine chapters are full of long discourses and are thus suitable for an analysis of the "dynamics among speaker, speech, and audience."

[2] Meynet points out: "The biblical texts are well composed, if they are analysed according to the laws of biblical rhetoric, and the study of their composition enables one to understand them better, as far as the analysis brings to light their *inner logic*." (italics mine) Roland Meynet, *Rhetorical Analysis: An Introduction to Biblical Rhetoric* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1998), 169.

decisions or actions."[3] Rhetorical criticism is advantageous in illuminating the unifying

rhetoric in Prov 1–9 by explaining the discontinuities (e.g., the break between Prov 1–7

and 8–9). Here first is a brief history of classic rhetoric.

A Brief History of Classical Rhetoric

Rhetorical criticism has roots in the ancient Greek world.[4] The study of rhetoric "is

not a modern phenomenon but a classical discipline going back to Aristotle (384–322

BCE), whose *Rhetoric* is probably the most influential ancient textbook on the subject.

However, what has come to be known as the *ars rhetorica* (the art of rhetoric) goes back

even further, to the writings of Homer (ninth–eighth century BCE), whose heroes were

masters of the *rhetoricke techne* (the Greek equivalent of the Latin *ars rhetorica*)."[5]

Classical Greek rhetoric can be divided into four models under the names of Protagoras

(c. 490–400 BCE), Gorgias (480–375 BCE), Plato (427–347 BCE) and Aristotle (384–

322 BCE).[6]

In the later Hellenistic–Roman age, the study of rhetoric received greater attention.

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[3] George Kennedy, translator's introduction to Aristotle, *Aristotle on Rhetoric: A Theory of Civic Discourse* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), 7.

[4] A bibliography on the ancient Western rhetoric can be found in Richard Leo Enos, "The Classical Period," in *The Present State of Scholarship in Historical and Contemporary Rhetoric* (ed. Winifred Bryan Horner; Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1983), 10–39. For an useful tour in the development of western rhetoric see Thomas M. Conley, *Rhetoric in The European Tradition* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990), 1–52 and George A. Kennedy, *The Art of Persuasion in Greece* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1963), and *Classical Rhetoric and Its Christian and Secular Tradition from Ancient to Modern Times* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1980), 3–85.

[5] Karl Möller, "Rhetoric" *Dictionary for Theological Interpretation of the Bible* (ed. Kevin J. Vanhoozer; Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Book House Company, 2005), 687–8.

[6] According to T. M. Conley there are four distinct models of rhetoric in the Greek world: The first two models, Protagorean and Gorgianic, may be characterized as "Sophistic" on account of their stance against the absolute nature of truth. The third, the Platonic, challenged the Sophistic view of truth and its corresponding theory of rhetoric. The fourth model, Aristotelian questioned elements of both Sophistic and Platonic rhetoric. Aristotle's rejection of Plato's understanding of truth led to a challenge of Plato's disregard for rhetoric. For Aristotle, dialectic and rhetoric differ, but are not opposed to one another: "Rhetoric is the counterpart of dialectic." See Conley, *Rhetoric in The European Tradition*, 1–52.

Cicero (106–43 BCE), with his masterful pieces, *De Inventione: De Optimo Genere Oratorum*[7] and *De Oratre*[8], became the primary authority. Describing rhetoric as the discipline of speaking (*bene dicendi scientia*), Quintilian (c. 35–100 AD) stressed the persuasive and moral power of public speech. His *Institutio Oratoria*[9] conceived the subject as the center of a complete educational system.

Continuing to exert its impact on the following centuries, classical rhetoric, particularly the contributions of Aristotle and Cicero, has several representative features.[10] First, rhetoric involves three universal factors: speaker, speech, and audience (or author, text and reader).[11] These three are found in any rhetorical or persuasive situation. Second, the types of rhetoric are judicial (forensic), deliberative (hortatory), and demonstrative (epideictic). Judicial rhetoric, focusing on justice and the law courts, makes a right decision about *past* events. Deliberative rhetoric, focusing on expediency, operates in the public assembly. With the help of rhetorical skill speakers seek to persuade the audience about *future* events. Demonstrative rhetoric, focusing on adulation, belongs to public ceremony. Speakers use artful words to move the audience to praise for individuals in the *present*.

According to Aristotle, there are three and only three modes of artistic proof: *ethos*,

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[7] Marcus Tullius Cicero, *De Inventione: De Optimo Genere Oratorum* (*LCL*, trans. H. M. Hubbell; Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1949). The book deals with civil and moral rhetoric, with an extended treatment on memory.

[8] Marcus Tullius Cicero, *De Oratore* Books 1 and 2 (*LCL*; trans. E. W. Sutton and H. Rackham; Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1988) and Book 3 (*LCL*; trans. H. Rackham; Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1982). This book organized and unified the world of classic rhetoric, bringing together form and content, theory and practice, thinking and speaking, ethics and style.

[9] Marcus Fabius Quintilian, *Institutio Oratoria* (*LCL*; trans. H. E. Butler; London: Heinemann, 1932).

[10] See Trible, *Rhetorical Criticism*, 7–10, and George A. Kennedy, *New Testament Interpretation through Rhetorical Criticism* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1984), 15–30.

[11] Ibid., 15.

pathos and *logos*.[12] Rhetoric is built on the interplay of these modes.

Finally, ancient rhetoricians divided their subject into five parts, called "canons" or "faculties." Invention (*inventio*) concerns the discovery of material suitable to the occasion. Structure or arrangement (*dispositio*) organizes material into an ordered whole from introduction through conclusion. Style (*elocutio*), whether grand, moderate, or simple, seeks appropriate words for content (e.g. figures and tropes). Memory (*memoria*) devises mnemonic systems as preparation for oral delivery. It signals the firm grasp of content and form. Delivery (*pronunciation/actio*) concentrates on aspects of oral presentation appropriate to the subject and the style. These rhetorical features on factors, types, modes and divisions are useful for analysis in this study of Prov 1–9.

To summarize, classical rhetoric started with the discussion of truth in the beginning, and then later came to develop analysis and communication skills. Its various concerns demonstrate multifaceted dynamics among speakers, speeches and audiences, laying a foundation for education and communication in all ages.

Rhetorical Criticism and Biblical Studies

Rhetorical criticism became an important method in biblical interpretation from the earliest exegetes through the eighteenth century.[13] In the long history of biblical studies, many rhetoricians and theologians tried to approach the texts of the Scripture by means of

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[12] Aristotle, *The "Art" of Rhetoric* (*LCL*; trans. John Henry Freese; Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1926), 1.2.1356a and cf. Kennedy, *New Testament Interpretation through Rhetorical Criticism*, 15–19. *Ethos* means "character" and may be defined as the credibility that the author or speaker is able to establish in his work. *Pathos* develops in the audience and may be defined as the emotional reactions the hearers undergo as the orator plays upon their feelings. *Logos* is involved with the logical argument found within the discourse.

[13] For an introduction to the history of rhetoric in biblical interpretation see George A. Kennedy, *Classical Rhetoric and Its Christian and Secular Tradition from Ancient to Modern Times* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1980), 132–241; Wilhelm Wuellner, "Where is Rhetorical Criticism Taking Us?" *CBQ* 49 (1987): 451–78; Burton Mack, *Rhetoric and the New Testament* (Minneapolis: Augsburg/Fortress, 1989), 10; and Trible, *Rhetorical Criticism*, 14–17.

the rhetorical method,[14] including Augustine[15] and the New Testament editor Erasmus.[16]

Not until the late 19th and early 20th centuries did rhetorical study of the Bible experience

a sharp decline, though some exegetes still stressed the rhetorical means in the modern

ages.[17]

In the late twentieth century there was a renascence for biblical rhetorical criticism.

There were the three key moments in the revival of rhetoric for the biblical studies.[18] The

initial stimulus came from the 1955 SBL (Society of Biblical Literature) presidential

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[14] Augustine (354–430 CE), the master of rhetoric used rhetorical analysis to interpret the Bible. In the Middle Ages, Christian (e.g., Cassiodorus of Italy [c. 487–580 CE], the Venerable Bede of Britain [673–735 CE]) and Jewish scholars (e.g., Saadya Agaon [882–942 CE], Moses ibn Ezra [c. 1055–1140 CE]) drew attention to the significance of recognizing rhetorical devices in the interpretation of biblical texts. The rhetorical ardor lasted into the Renaissance. The Jewish scholar Messer Leon (c.1420–1498 CE), who wrote a treatise entitled *Sepher Nopheth Suphim* (*The Book of the Honeycomb's Flow*) utilized classical terms and the ancient Western rhetoric for the interpretation of scripture. Leon's contemporary, the other great Renaissance scholar Erasmus (c. 1466–1536 CE), also postulated the importance of rhetoric for the proper understanding of the Scripture.

[15] See Augustine, *De Doctrina Christiana* (ET: *On Christian Teaching*, trans. R. P. H. Green, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), 4.19–60. Augustine raises the question of how a person can best conduct a "careful investigation" and thus gain a "real understanding" of the scripture. He made the exegeses of Rom. 5:3–5, II Cor. 11:16–30, and Amos 6:1–6 in which he identifies the "rule of eloquence" followed in these texts (i.e., rhetorical devices such as climax, invective, and elaboration). He concludes that "As certain eloquent and discerning authorities were able to see and say, the things that are learned in the so called art of public speaking would not have been observed, noted, and systematized into discipline if they had not first been found in the minds of orators; so why be surprised if they are also found in the words of men sent by God, the creator of all minds? We should there acknowledge that our canonical authors and teachers are eloquent, and not just wise, with a kind of eloquence appropriate to the kind of persons they were" (4.60).

[16] See Desiderius Erasmus, *On the Method of Study* (*CWE* 23, ed. Craig R. Thompson trans. Brain McGregor, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1978). According to Erasmus, it would be helpful for the interpreter to "to have at your fingertips the chief points of rhetoric, namely propositions, the grounds of proof, figures of speech, amplifications, and the rules governing transitions. For these are conducive not only to criticism but also to imitation" (670). In his own practice, he used rhetorical terms to describe textual features. For example, in order to explain the text he employs rhetorical terminology (e.g., exordium, proofs). See Erasmus, *Paraphrase on the Acts of the Apostles* (*CWE* 50, ed. and trans. Robert D. Sider, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1995), 18 and 96. Also cf. Louis Bouyer, "Erasmus in Relation to the Medieval Biblical Tradition," in *The Cambridge History of the Bible* (Vol. 2, ed. G. W. H. Lampe, Cambridge: University Press, 1969), 501.

[17] Kennedy, *Classical Rhetoric and Its Christian and Secular Tradition from Ancient to Modern Times*, 5.

[18] In rhetorical study, these three key moments with the significance of revival are suggested by Burton Mack. See Mack, *Rhetoric and the New Testament*, 12–7.

address of Amos Wilder: "Scholars, Theologians, and Ancient Rhetoric."[19] The second

stimulus was contributed, in 1968, by the SBL presidential address of James Muilenburg:

"Form Criticism and Beyond."[20] The third stimulus, according to Burton Mark, came

from the 1969 English translation of Perelman and Tyteca's 1958 French work, *Traité de*

l' Argumentation (English Title: *The New Rhetoric*).[21] These earlier efforts, particularly

Muilenburg's, led to the flowering of rhetorical biblical criticism in the following

decades.[22]

The rhetorical perspective of understanding the Bible "can interject hermeneutics

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[19] Amos Wilder, "Scholars, Theologians, and Ancient Rhetoric," *JBL* 75 (1965): 1–11. The address drew attention to the interpretation of imaginative–symbolic language, especially in New Testament eschatological texts. Widler described this discourse as "an extraordinary rhetoric of faith" and encouraged the use of literary methods sensitive to anthropology and psychology for interpretation, rather than methods espoused by the ritual–myth school and the biblical theology school.

[20] Muilenburg, "Form Criticism and Beyond," 1–18.

[21] Cf. Chaim Perelman and L. Olbrechts–Tyteca, *The New Rhetoric: A Treatise on Argumentation*, (trans. J. Wilkinson and P. Weaver, Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1969). Mack thought that The New Rhetoric made three direct contributions to the renewal of rhetoric. 1) Perelman and Tyteca defined rhetoric as argumentation. By this definition, they challenged the prevailing understanding of rhetoric as stylistic ornamentation and reasserted the ancient definition of rhetoric as the art of persuasion. 2) They emphasized the importance of the rhetorical situation for understanding the persuasive force of argumentation. This recognition provided an opportunity to bridge the gap between literary and social–historical criticism, an opportunity seized by many New Testament exegetes. 3) Perelman and Tyteca linked the persuasive power of speech not only to its logic or argumentation, but to the manner in which it addresses the social and cultural history of its audience and speaker. See Mack, *Rhetoric and the New Testament*, 14–7.

[22] The river of biblical rhetorical criticism receives contributions from excellent exegetes such as Phyllis Trible on the theory of rhetorical criticism and Jonah, Jack R. Lundbom on Jeremiah, Anthony R. Ceresko on Samuel, Yehoshua Gitay and Richard J. Clifford on the Second Isaiah, R. Reed Lessing on Isaiah's Tyre Oracle, John Barton on the Prophets, Charles S. Shaw on Micah, and David Clines on Job. See Trible, *Rhetorical Criticism*; Jack R. Lundbom, *Jeremiah: A study in Ancient Hebrew Rhetoric* (Missoula, Mont.: SBL and Scholars Press, 1975); Anthony R. Ceresko, "A Rhetorical Analysis of David's 'Boast' [1 Samuel 17:34–37]: Some Reflections on Method," *CBQ* 47 (1985): 58–74; Yehoshua Gitay, *Prophecy and Persuasion: A Study of Isaiah 40–48* (Bonn: Linguistica Biblica, 1981); Richard J. Clifford, *Fair Spoken and Persuading: An Interpretation of Second Isaiah* (New York: Paulist Press, 1984); R. Reed Lessing, *Interpreting Discontinuity: Isaiah's Tyre Oracle* (Winona Lake, Indiana: Eisenbrauns, 2004); John Barton, "History and Rhetoric in the Prophets," in *The Bible As Rhetoric* (ed. Martin Warner; London: Routledge, 1990, 51–64); Ivan J. Ball on Zephaniah, Ivan J. Ball, *A Rhetorical Study of Zephaniah* (Berkeley: BIBAL Press, 1988); Charles S. Shaw, *The Speeches of Micah: A Rhetorical–Historical Analysis* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1993); David Clines, "Deconstructing the book of Job," in *The Bible as Rhetoric*, (ed. Martin Warner; London: Routledge, 1990), 65–80.

into critical interpretation without compromising the rigor of scholarly analysis."[23] That

is, the rhetorical interpretation does not attempt to overthrow the contributions of form

criticism but intends to *supplement* as Muilenburg suggests, or concisely, to

reconceptualize. Patrick and Scult indicate:

> The task begins with a reconstruction of the significant interpretive moments
> in the text's history. Here much of the work has already been done by
> existing exegetical approaches. These approaches need to be
> reconceptualized, as attempts to recover a moment in the history of a text in
> which it was a living communication.[24]

On the one hand, reconstruction highlights the intention to examine the composition of

the text in a rhetorical way; on the other hand, the living communication manifests the

significant function of persuasion that classical rhetoric emphasizes.

Phyllis Trible divides the various methods that go by the name "rhetorical

criticism" into two branches: the first includes those that apply James Muilenburg's

opinion to the structure of a passage, which she calls the study of the "art of

composition." This she distinguishes from the branch represented by Yehoshua Gitay,

which she names the study of the "art of persuasion."[25]

First of all, the research of the art of composition is in fact indistinguishable from

poetics. Many rhetorical critics consider structure an aesthetic phenomenon. The

uncovering of structure does, nevertheless, serve the cause of seeing a passage as a unity,

overriding the fragmentation of textual units by source criticism.[26] Trible utilizes textual

arrangement and deictic signals as an entrée into the message that the text means to

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[23] Dale Partick and Allen Scult, *Rhetoric and Biblical Interpretation* (BLS 26; ed. David J. A. Clines and Philip R. Davies, Sheffield: Almond, 1990), 20.

[24] Ibid.

[25] See Trible, *Rhetorical Criticism*, 25–48.

[26] Dale Patrick, *The Rhetoric of Revelation in the Hebrew Bible* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1999), 5.

convey. Second, Gitay leads the other trend of rhetorical criticism, namely seeing that

rhetoric is the art of persuasion. Following the same stylistic features as the

compositional critics, Gitay describes the structure in classical rhetorical terms: thesis,

arguments for it and against alternatives, ethos and pathos. In Gitay's rhetorical approach,

prophetic texts have the earmarks of oral addresses designed to persuade; so he

concentrates his study on the prophetical literature and postulates that the types and

strategies of classical rhetoric are found in biblical prophecy.[27]

Rhetorical criticism has been advantageous in approaching Biblical studies since

the time of early Christian exegetes (e.g., Augustine). Although this method declined

during the 19th–20th centuries, it has regained the attention of scholars in the past several

decades. It is apparent that the modern achievements of rhetorical criticism both in the art

of composition or in the art of persuasion are still under the impact of classical rhetoric.

In other words, today's scholars often apply various rhetorical theories to the biblical

texts and discover new insights in the Scriptures.

Rhetorical Criticism and Proverbs 1–9

The interpretation of the biblical text presents fruitful and multifaceted results when

rhetorical criticism is applied to Prov 1–9. The text of Prov 1–9 is designed for an

educational purpose (Prov 1:2–6) and is oral in it nature, so that the discipline of

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[27] See footnote 15 in ibid., 5–6. Also cf. Gitay, *Prophecy and Persuasion; Isaiah and His Audience: The Structure and Meaning of Isaiah1–12* (Assen/Masstricht, The Netherlands: Van Gorcum, 1991); "A Study of Amos's Art of Speech: A Rhetorical Analysis of Amos 3:1–15," *CBQ* 42 (1980): 293–309; "Reflections on the Study of the Prophetic Discourse: The Question of Isaiah 1:2–20," *VT* 33 (1983):207–21; "Rhetorical Criticism," in *To Each Its Own Meaning: An Introduction to Biblical Criticisms and their Application* (ed. S. L. McKenzie and S. R. Haynes; Louisville, Ky.: John Knox Press, 1993), 135–49; "Psalm 1 and the rhetoric of religious argumentation" in *Literary Structure and Rhetorical Strategies in the Hebrew Bible* (ed. L.J. de Regt, J. de Waard, and J.P. Fokkelman; Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 1996).

rhetorical criticism focusing on "the dynamics among speaker, speech, and audience"[28]

becomes advantageous in demonstrating my thesis, that is, that the father's rhetoric in

Prov 1–7 continues and climaxes in Prov 8–9.

Daniel J. Estes employs the rhetorical approach to study the theory of education that

lies behind the text.[29] Estes organizes his study of Prov 1–9 into seven categories:

worldview, values for education, goals for education, curriculum for education, the

process of instruction, the role of the teacher, and the role of the learner.[30] These seven

categories are based on his rhetorical analysis of Prov 1–9 and lead to a holistic reading

of the text. "The majority of rhetorical strategies in Prov 1–9 combine commands by the

teacher with some type of substantiation designed to persuade the learner to choose to act

in accordance with the teacher's direction."[31] Estes construes the teacher as the chief

speaker by insisting on the teacher–pupil relationship in Prov 1–9.[32] For instance, in

chapter 6 of his book he identifies "the role of the teacher" (namely, the speaking father)

as the expert authority, a facilitator and a guide on the basis of his teacher's rhetoric.[33]

This so–called teacher applies directive modes such as address and description, and these

are seen as being "central to the learning process."[34]In the other words, the teacher's

rhetoric is the overarching rhetoric in both the fatherly discourses (Prov 1–7) and the

wisdom poems (Prov 8–9).

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[28] Vernon K. Robbins, *ABD* 2:843.

[29] Estes, *Hear, My Son.*

[30] Ibid., 125–34.

[31] Ibid., 124.

[32] Estes points out that "Proverbs 1–9 repeatedly uses the expressions 'father' and 'son' to speak of the teacher–pupil relationship." Ibid., 47.

[33] Ibid., 125–43.

[34] Ibid., 123.

Estes gets the right method (rhetorical criticism) but picks the wrong speaker and

an incorrect *Sitz im Leben*. For example, he contradicts himself by indicating:

> Traditional wisdom is transmitted both by *parents* and by teachers. The
> paired references to father and mother in Proverbs 1:8 and 6:20 are unique to
> Hebrew wisdom literature in comparison with the ancient literature of Egypt
> and Mesopotamia (Whybray 1994b: 37). It is likely that most of the frequent
> references in Proverbs 1–9 to father and son fit best into the teacher–pupil
> relationship. Nevertheless, the explicit reference to the mother in these verses
> makes it plausible that the *home* was a significant contributor to the education
> of the young in ancient Israel.[35]

Estes doesn't provide *any textual/internal* evidence to prove the existence of teachers or

schools in ancient Israel;[36] moreover, he cannot give a reasonable explanation for the

teaching role of a mother (1:8 and 6:20), which could only occur in a family (not a

school).[37] In the speaker's autobiographic description (4:3–4), Estes also distorts the

meaning of the text by saying "the teacher refers to knowledge that he received from his

own teacher *or father*, which he is now transmitting to the student."[38] His methodology,

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[35] Ibid., 32 (italic mine). Estes contradicts himself when he insists on the teacher–school as the *Sitz im Leben* of Prov 1–9 but cannot deny the possibility of parent–family. In fact, the familial milieu is more likely for the implied speaker in the text according to the textual evidence.

[36] For example, Estes insists that the address "my son" is used to students by teachers, as he assumes: "Proverbs 1–9, however, appears to derive from outside the home. The repeated address, 'My son,' parallels the custom in other ancient Near Eastern cultures of referring to the teacher–learner relationship in the language of father and son." Ibid., 95. Estes doesn't give any textual/internal evidence to support this assumption.

[37] Even in this quotation (footnote 35), Estes uses Whybray's work to explain the occurrence of mother in the text; however, Whybray sides for family (not for school) in this quote as Whybray indicates: "It is not certain whether the terms **son** and **father** in these Instructions (Prov 1–7) are to be taken literally or whether they have the more impersonal meaning of 'pupil' and 'teacher'. But the reference to the **mother's teaching** side by side with that of the father, which is not found either in Egyptian Instructions or in what remains of the Babylonian ones, makes a family setting plausible. Mothers are mentioned with perhaps unusual frequency in Proverbs in conjunction with references to fathers and in a way which may reflect the importance given in Israel to family life." (black Whybray's) Whybray, *Proverbs*, 37.

[38] Ibid., 95(italics mine). In Prov 4:3–4, the speaker says: "When I was a son before my father, tender, the only one in the sight of my mother, he taught me, and said to me: Let your heart hold fast my words; keep my commandments, and live!" How could the listener not be the son of the speaker? Estes misunderstands the speaker–listener relationship and the *Sitz im Leben,* so he misrecognizes the unifying rhetoric. Instead of the teacher's rhetoric, the appropriate unifying rhetoric in Prov 1–9 is the father's rhetoric.

based on the education theories, brings in an incorrect nuance and meaning of the text, thus making an inappropriate unity that the present text doesn't intend.

Carol A. Newsom, in the analysis of the rhetorical phenomenon found in Prov 1–9, introduces an "I–You" style of inter–subjective communication.[39] The privileged axis of communication in Prov 1–9, according to Newsom, is from father to son, and those discourses embody and generate a symbolic world.[40] In order to interpret the discontinuity between the father's and wisdom's talks, she argues that the fatherly discourses and wisdom's speeches complement each other and asserts: "the father is the authoritative voice in the family," and "*hokmôt* (personified wisdom) is the corresponding public voice 'in the streets,' in the public squares.'"[41] Newsom offers a better analysis of the rhetoric by identifying the chief speaker as a father, which is closer to how the current text is arranged than the theory in which the chief speaker is a teacher (cf. Estes' opinion above).

Newsom's psychological approach to rhetorical criticism also brings in a subjective/arbitrary interpretation of the text. For example, when Newsom explains those first–person–plural pronouns (the cohortative 'let us', the subjective 'we' and the

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[39] Newsom, "Woman and the Discourse of Patriarchal Wisdom: A Study of Proverbs 1–9," 142–160. Newsom points out some of the features of Proverbs 1–9 that have not always been sufficiently studied in scholarly discussions. First, these chapters are virtually all talk. Second, the cast of characters is severely limited, and the privileged axis of communication is that from father to son. Third, discourse embodies and generates a symbolic world. Indeed since Newsom's time on, these features have been more discussed in modern scholarship but not by focusing on the father's rhetoric that drives the text.

[40] For instance, when Newsom interprets the unchaste woman in Prov 7:24–27, she asserts: "The father's concluding words in verses 24–27 expose the monstrous, mythic dimension of the strange woman. She is not just a woman who has seduced a simple–minded young man. She is a predator who has slain multitudes. Indeed, her vagina is the gate of Sheol. Her womb, death itself." Ibid., 155–6. And for Prov 8, she indicates: "Chapter 8, with its strong mythic overtones, is written largely in the symbolic register." Ibid., 142. Apparently to interpret Prov 1–9, Newsom adopts the symbolic perspective to develop her "I–Thou" theory.

[41] Ibid., 145.

objective 'us'), namely those gang–member–like people who intend to seduce the son in the first fatherly discourse (1:8–19), she understands that "the egalitarian subtext is made explicit in v. 14b, 'we will all share a common purse.'"[42] However, she "incredibly identifies the son's entire generation with these crooks to deconstruct the text to teach 'the division of power between older and younger men in patriarchal society.' These criminals are peers only in age, not in values."[43] Besides, she observes that the idea of personified Wisdom (Prov 8–9) is the supplement/correspondence to the fatherly discourses (Prov 1–7) but doesn't explain how or why this relationship happens.[44] In summary, Newsom notices the significance of continuity in Prov 1–9 (e.g., the significance of supplement/correspondence) but fails to treat the text as an integral whole.

Michael V. Fox applies rhetorical criticism to the fatherly discourses in Prov 1–9 by suggesting a tripartite format (exordium, lesson, and conclusion).[45] He builds his theory on "the ten lectures" (discourses) of Prov 1–7, in which the author must fashion a persona who can reach his audience, the readers. The persona, for his part, has his own rhetoric in addressing his son. According to Fox, the main qualities of this father's rhetoric are

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[42] Ibid., 144.

[43] Waltke, *The Book of Proverbs Chapters 1–15*, 189. According to Waltke, "Their rival discourse is based on the common enterprise of seeking immediate wealth outside the limits of law rather than the deferred wealth that comes through development of character within law (see 16:29)." Ibid.

[44] The so–called supplement/correspondence can be any kind of rhetorical relationship such as consecution, opposition or cause–consequence. Newsom doesn't provide a reasonably organized explanation for her "I–Thou" theory based on her rhetorical efforts. For instance, how many "I" (the first–person speaker) do occur in Prov 1–9? (e.g., the father, personified Wisdom, Dame Folly, the strange woman and etc.) Can these first–person "I" speakers be the same or under the same rhetoric? Can the speaker of the rhetorical prologue who mentions "the fear of Yahweh" (1:7) be the same as the figure of personified Wisdom who also uses the same formulas (9:10)? Newsom doesn't explain why or how.

[45] Following Plöger's the triple formula of oration—*exordium, propositio,* and *peroration,* Fox postulates that the text of Prov 1–7 contains the ten father–son lectures with the tripartite format (I. 1:8–19; II. 2:1–22; III.3:1–12; IV. 3:21–35; V. 4:1–9; VI. 4:10–19; VII. 4:20–27; VIII. 5:1–23; IX. 6:20–35; X. 7:1–27). Besides, there are also five interludes (A. 1:20–33; B. 3:13–20; C. 6:1–19; D. 8:1–36; E. 9:1–6+11, 13–18) and some insertions (3:3a; 4:27a ,27b; 6:8a–8c, 11a; 8:13a, 19; 9:7–10, 12). See Fox, *Proverbs 1–9,* 322–324 and also 44–9. Also see Plöger, *Sprüche Salomos,* 23–4.

authority, promise and warning, intimacy, vividness, and irony.[46] In fact, Fox's

categorization is built upon a modification of Whybray's theory,[47] making a holistic

reading more difficult. Neither his assumption of insertions[48] nor the arrangement of

interludes[49] pieces the text together into a holistic reading.

Fox's father's rhetoric only extends to Prov 1–7 without continuing its rhetorical

impact into Prov 8–9 because Prov 8–9 was "added at different times to the Ten Lectures

(Prov 1–7)"[50] (according to his redactional approach). Fox states:

> The lectures are constructed according to a careful tripartite design, as
> described previously. Their author shows a concern for schematic

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[46] Fox. *Proverbs 1–9*, 348–351.

[47] Fox's ten father–son lectures (discourses) are no different from Whybray's ten fatherly instructions (discourses). At least the textual range is the same for both. Fox thought the text of Prov 1–9 "was not written by a single author but rather grew in several stages." Ibid., 322. Disagreeing with Whybray, Fox criticizes: "Whybray's procedure is procrustean. He assumes that the instructions– though supposedly by different authors– were extremely uniform to start with. Then he pares down the instructions until they all fit a preconceived primitive mold by excising virtually everything that seems to him to be redundant or emphatic or to change the topic. Neither repetitiveness nor diversity is evidence for different authorship. Repetition is hardly foreign to educational tracts. Identifying additions and separating compositional layers requires locating the seams: syntactic roughnesses and incompatibilities in conception that run counter to the purpose of the unit as a whole." Ibid. Fox's theory could be understood as the modification of Whybray's in the ten fatherly discourses.

[48] For instance, Prov 3:3a has "Let not kindness and faithfulness forsake you." Fox considers Prov 3:3a an insertion merely because the phrase חֶסֶד וֶאֱמֶת, (kindness and faithfulness) refers to God's unchangeable love toward humanity in His covenant. Problem is not the meanings of these two terms but the uses of them. According to Fox, these two terms can only be limited to the divine usage no matter what. See Fox, *Proverbs 1–9*, 144–45. Bruce Waltke criticizes this opinion saying, "However, he [Fox] has to posit against normal rules of composition that 'bind them' in verses B refers not to the parallel and nearest antecedent *hesed we'emet*, but to teaching and commandments in v. 1." Waltke, *The Book of Proverbs: Chapters 1–15*, 241. In fact, the metonymy of "kindness and faithfulness" (חֶסֶד וֶאֱמֶת) here simply refers to human ethics. The same phrase that appears in Prov 16:6 and 20:28 also support this idea.

[49] Fox's so–called "interlude" also implies insertion. That is, those wisdom materials cannot fit in the entire text of Prov 1–9 as the reading proceeds. In fact, they are not interludes at all but the fabric of the father's rhetoric. For example, Prov 6:1–9 which Fox accepts as an interlude starts with the same "בְּנִי my son), and does not differ from the rest of the fatherly discourses. The text of Prov 6:1–19 is excluded just because it cannot fit in the tripartite format of exordium–lesson–conclusion that Fox uses to define each of the ten fatherly discourses.

[50] Ibid., 323 (parenthesis mine); also see 323–9. Fox regards "the interludes as later additions by different authors." Ibid., 47. In the others words, Interludes D (8:1–36) and E (9:1–18) were not part of original rhetorical whole. Why did the section of Prov 8–9 dissociate from the main body of the text? Fox explains: "The interludes are probably by different authors, but each one seems to know the contributions of his predecessors and to be responding to them." Ibid., 47 (parenthesis mine).

organization. It would be *unlike* such an author to create and then disrupt a neat set of ten similar units by dispersing five passages (five interludes) of very different character in his composition. Their location of these passages has its own logic, but this is *not* an extension of the logic of the lectures."[51]

Fox rightly highlights the father's rhetoric but fails in the consistency of his theory by misunderstanding the father's rhetoric in Prov 1–9. In fact, he admits that Prov 8–9 (Interludes D and E) as well as the rest interludes (Interludes A and B, namely 1:20–33 and 3:13–20) are "thoughtful reflections on a theme found in the lectures (Prov 1–7), the excellence of wisdom."[52] But why then are these thoughtful reflections not considered part of the original text? Why is the father's rhetoric in Prov 1–9 only tripartite in design (Prov1–7) but not seen to include the skillful use of personification/metaphor (Prov 8–9)? According to Fox, the section of Prov 8–9 is a discontinuity, which means it is difficult to explain how this part functions rhetorically in the entire text of Prov 1–9.

The impact that Fox brings in the interpretation of Prov 1–9 still remains. Glenn D. Pemberton, one of Fox's followers, distinguishes the three types of lectures (discourses) within the fatherly talks of Prov 1–9: the calls to apprenticeship (1:8–19, 2:1–22, 4:1–9, 4:10–19), the calls to remember and obey (3:1–12, 3:21–35, 4:20–27), and the warnings against illicit sexual relations (5:1–23, 6:20–35, 7:1–27).[53] Following Fox, Pemberton's analysis of the father's rhetoric entirely excludes the section of Prov 8–9. He assumes that these fatherly lectures (discourses) in Prov 1–7 "arises from an educational relationship of a teacher and his pupil(s). Within this setting, again like 1:8–19, the

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[51] Ibid., 327 (italic and parenthesis mine); also cf. 328.

[52] Ibid., 47.

[53] Pemberton, *The Rhetoric of the Father*, 281. Pemberton explains: "The evidence for this classification comes from analysis and comparison of the artistic proofs in the lectures, *logos* (rational arguments), *ethos* (credibility of the speaker), and *pathos* (emotional arguments)." Ibid.

rhetorical problem faced by the teacher is the acquisition of his pupil's full attention."[54] In the other words, Pemberton's unifying rhetoric (the teacher's rhetoric) functions only in Prov 1–7 and doesn't continue into Prov 8–9.

Sebastiano Pinto builds his sociolinguistic–psychological analysis of the father's instructions wholly upon Fox's categorization.[55] Pinto notices the symbolic value of language in Prov 1–9 and applies his scientific/psychological understanding of the biblical text to Fox's rhetorical approach;[56] however, like Fox, his forerunner, he cannot extend the rhetoric that the father uses in language (Prov 1–7) into the wisdom poems (Prov 8–9), and thus fails to recognize the unity of the text.

Rhetorical criticism has caused much attention and revealed itself as a multifaceted approach to the study of Prov 1–9. Current scholarship mostly focuses rhetorical analysis on the father's (or teacher's role) role in Prov 1–7 without moving into chapters 8–9. These rhetorical critics (e.g., Fox, Estes and Pinto) don't consider a unifying rhetoric possible in the whole of Prov 1–9.

Chapter Summary

Since its birth thousands of years ago, rhetorical criticism has a long tradition. Its emphasis on the dynamics among speaker, speech and audience is recognized in biblical scholarship as a valid and important interpreting tool. This method either becomes a response to other disciplines (e.g., form–redactional criticism), or it contributes insight to

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[54] Ibid., 130.

[55] See Sebastinao Pinto, *Ascolta Figlio: Autorità e Antropologia Dell'insegnamento in Proverbi 1–9* (Roma: Città Nuova, 2006), 34–9 and also cf. Pinto's application of Fox's categorization in 40–198. Pinto seeks to conjugate the Bible and human sciences through the use of Prov 1–9. He explains: "Gli esiti a cui siamo pervenuti nella nostra ricerca ci impongono, alla fine, di dichiarare la possibilità di coniugare Bibbia e scienze umane, avendo sempre chiara, però, la necessità di una ponderata misura di giudizio." Ibid., 334.

[56] Ibid., 221–7.

the biblical text when combined with different approaches (e.g., linguistic theories, educational theories or psychological theories). When rhetorical criticism is applied to Prov 1–9, the issue of a unifying rhetoric becomes critical. Most current rhetorical critics (e.g., Fox and Estes) find a consistent rhetoric in Prov 1–7 but fail to extend this rhetoric into the rest of the text (Prov 8–9). This study will show how a unifying rhetoric (the father's rhetoric) that is identified in Prov 1–7 in fact continues and even climaxes in Prov 8–9.

CHAPTER FOUR

RHETORICAL STRATEGIES

The significance of rhetorical criticism is revealed as it approaches the text of Prov

1–9 to discover a unifying rhetoric, which, as this study proposes, is the father's rhetoric.

The tasks of a rhetorical analysis based on the father's attempts to persuade his son

demand many and various efforts. As Meynet indicates, a rhetorical analysis "is but one

of the operations, one of the multiple steps of the exegetical work, along with the textual

criticism, lexicographic enquiry, grammatical and syntactical analysis, history of the text,

determination of the literary genres, and so on. This somehow reduces its significance

but, on the other hand, acknowledge its importance."[1] It becomes even more important

that this study uses rhetorical analysis to approach the structure and reading of Prov 1–9.

As previously discussed, both the structure and proper reading of Prov 1–9 depend

on the rhetoric of the speaker. Both the unity and continuity of the text are revealed if the

speaker's rhetoric is properly recognized and analyzed. In order to approach the text of

Prov1–9 from a holistic perspective, rhetorical criticism will be employed to examine

how these factors of rhetoric (speaker, speech and audience) interact with one another in

a communal context,[2] because every part of the text is placed where it is for a reason and

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[1] Meynet, *Rhetorical Analysis*, 20–1.

[2] Lessing brings insight into the working definition for rhetorical criticism and states: "That is to say, in simple terms, rhetoric is the study of oral communication in a communal context. Both of the elements in this definition are noteworthy. First, rhetoric deals with *oral* communication. Second, it is also interested in how speech persuades in *communal* context. Language acts in different ways in one–on–one situations as opposed to a larger group of persons. Rhetoric is interested specifically in the context of larger groups."

should be looked at "from a point of view of the author's or editor's intent."[3] This study

is based on the assumption that the entire block of Prov 1–9 was completed by one author

or editor/redactor.[4]

In the following chapters, this study will explain how rhetorical features operate in

Proverbs 1–9 in the *compositional* and *persuasive* dimensions.[5] The text of Prov 1–9 will

be examined in order to demonstrate its *structure* and *content arrangement* in the

compositional dimension. As the persuasive dimension is examined, this study will also

demonstrate how *stylistic elements* (linguistic elements), *ethos, pathos,* and *imagery*

devices support the relationship between Prov 1–7 and 8–9.

Rhetorical Strategies in the Compositional Dimension

The compositional dimension includes rhetorical strategies used in the structure and

content arrangement in Prov 1–9. The compositional dimension provides this

investigation with a macroscopic picture of these nine chapters by using the unifying

perspective of the father's rhetoric. The unity of the text is the focus in this regard. As the

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(italic Lessing's) Lessing, *Interpreting Discontinuit*, 131–2. Nel also states: "Only the context will determine the particular genre of any *masal*." Philip J. Nel, *The Structure and Ethos of the Wisdom Admonitions of the Wisdom Admonitions in Proverbs* (New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1982), 8.

[3] According to Kennedy, "rhetorical criticism takes the text as we have it, whether the work of a single author or the product of editing, and looks at it from the point of view of the author's or editor's intent, the unified results, and how it would be perceived by an audience of near contemporaries." Kennedy, *New Testament Interpretation through Rhetorical Criticism*, 4; also see the similar idea in T. Anthony Perry, *Wisdom Literature and the Structure of Proverbs* (University Park, Pennsylvania: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1993), 84.

[4] See Kitchen, "Proverbs and Wisdom Books of the Ancient Near East," 69–144; Waltke, *The Book of Proverbs Chapters 1–15*, 31–6; Longman, *Proverbs*, 23–6; Fox, *Proverbs 1–9*, 10–1; Perdue, *Proverbs*, 1–3; Murphy, *The Tree of Life*, 18–9; Whybray, *Proverbs*, 15; and Andrew E. Steinmann, "Proverbs 1–9 as a Solomonic Composition," *JETS* 43 (2000): 659–74.

[5] Möller adopts Trible's definition on rhetorical criticism and indicates: "Rhetorical criticism can take many different forms, but in biblical studies its two most dominant orientations are what have been called the 'art of composition' and the 'art of persuasion'." Karl Möller, "Rhetorical Criticism," *Dictionary for Theological Interpretation of the Bible* (ed. Kevin J. Vanhoozer; Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker, 2005), 689. Trible calls the approach that utilizes Muilenburg's opinion in analyzing the structure of a passage the art of composition. The other branch of rhetorical criticism represented by Y. Gitay, she names the art of persuasion. Trible, *Rhetorical Criticism*, 25–48. The idea of these two dimensions is inspired by Trible.

content arrangement is examined, this study will demonstrate how it emphasizes the continuity of thought flow in Prov 1–9, developing it step by step, and from beginning to end in the text. Here first is the investigation the structure.

Structure

This rhetorical analysis is based on the presupposition that the biblical texts are well composed.[6] Therefore a rhetorical critic has to identify the limit of a literary unit by noting literary devices such as inclusio and climax, and then discerning the text's structure.[7] The text of Prov 1–9 is intentionally entitled with a Solomonic superscription (1:1; cf. 10:1; 25:1) and encircled by a well–designed *inclusio* (the fear of Yahweh in both 1:7 and 9:10), as we shall see later. Therefore this section is clearly a rhetorical unit.[8]

Structure (*dispositio*) is defined as an "arrangement of material in an organized whole."[9] Whether one postulates an author or an editor, the structure is the first and most

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[6] When Meynet introduces the presuppositions of rhetorical analysis in the biblical text, he indicates "the biblical texts are well composed, if they are analysed according to the laws of biblical rhetoric, and the study of their composition enables one to understand them better, as far as the analysis brings to ligt their inner logic. The first presupposition of rhetorical analysis is that the biblical texts are composed. And, should one say from the beginning, that they are for the most part well composed." Meynet, *Rhetorical Analysis*, 169 (italics Meynet's).

[7] In his presidential lecture on rhetorical criticism, Muilenburg assigned two tasks to the rhetorical critic. The first task is to identify the limits of a literary unit by using devices of form and content such as climax, inclusio, and chiasm for the boundaries. The second one is to discern structure. After overall design, individual parts, literary devices are identified; a rhetorical critic has to discern how they work together, and to explain how they function in marking sequences and shifts within units. See the discussion in James Muilengburg, "Form Criticism and Beyond." *JBL* 88 (1969): 8–18 and also Trible, *Rhetorical Criticism*, 27–8.

[8] Identifying "rhetorical unit(s)" is the first of the five steps that Kennedy proposes to develop a rhetorical–critical approach to biblical interpretation. (The rest are rhetorical situation/imperative stimulus, rhetorical genre, style/rhetorical strategy, and rhetorical effectiveness.) See Kennedy, *New Testament Interpretation through Rhetorical Criticism*, 33–38; and also see relevant discussion in Wuellner "Where Is Rhetorical Criticism Taking Us?" 455–60. In an organized chiasmus, Waltke postulates a holistic structure in this rhetorical unit (Prov 1–9). This also structurally supports the section of Prov 1–9 as an integral whole. See Waltke, *The Book of Proverbs Chapters 1–15*, 10–3.

[9] Trible, *Rhetorical Criticism*, 9.

important feature to examine for evidence of unity and integrity in Prov 1–9.

Three issues are examined to support the unity of Proverbs 1–9. The first two are the *wisdom–centered structure* (1:8–4:19) that prepares the climax (8:1–36) and the *evil–focused structure* (4:20–7:27) that manifests the climax (8:1–36). Both of these two issues are discussed in the block of Prov 1–7. The third issue examines the *climax and conclusion* (9:1–18) achieved in Prov 8–9. All of these investigations target the unity of the composition in Prov 1–9.

Content Arrangement

Content arrangement is defined as the development of thought sequence based on the semantic characteristics of coherence.[10] In his study on rhetorical style, Muilenburg considered repetition "a prominent feature of Hebrew rhetoric and style"[11] and this approach in rhetorical criticism, "centers *thought*, gives a sense of totality, provides *continuity*, signals the structure and limits of units, and so discloses the character of biblical thinking."[12] Continuity means there is a development of thought. It is necessary to investigate this content arrangement among the discourses in Prov 1–9, particularly as it relates to the different voices (e.g., father's or personified Wisdom's).[13] This

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[10] This definition is inspired and supported by Longacre. In the discussion of case frames, Longacre points out: "From a different viewpoint, we can examine a text analytically to see what are the semantic characteristics of its mainline of development. Certain assumptions are relevant here: (1) that a discourse is by definition semantically coherent; (2) that the semantic characteristics of the predicates of a discourse (whether verbs, adjectives, or nominalizations) are crucial to the semantic characterization of the whole discourse; (3) predicates on the mainline of development form a more narrowly coherent set; and (4) predicates which are off the line are selectionally less restricted and present a more diffuse semantic picture." Robert E Longacre, *The Grammar of Discourse* (2nd ed. New York/London: Plenum, 1996), 217.

[11] James Muilenburg, "A Study in Hebrew Rhetoric: Repetition and Style," VTSup 1 (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1953), 97 and also 97–111.

[12] Trible, *Rhetorical Criticism*, 28.(italic mine)

[13] Trible notices the importance of the analysis of rhetorical discourse in the trend of rhetorical criticism and use Goodwin as an example. Trible indicates: "The secular scholar David Goodwin subsumes the varieties of ideas under two accepted definitions: analysis of rhetorical discourse and rhetorical analysis

investigation will focus on the continuity and coherence of thought.

Three perspectives will be examined to demonstrate the continuity/coherence of the content arrangement in Prov 1–9. They are the *progressive perspective*, the *contrastive perspective* and the *perspective of the father's comments*. Each of these perspectives represents a different approach to the thought sequence/flow that moves from Prov 1–7 into Prov 8–9, thus demonstrating the continuity in these nine chapters.

Summary

In this compositional dimension, both the unity and continuity of the text are the foci. The rhetorical strategies that this study adopts to develop its rationale emphasize repetition and balance in sequence. That is, the father's rhetoric connects the fatherly discourses (Prov 1–7) with the wisdom materials (Prov 8–9) in unity, and in continuity, demonstrates the climax in Prov 8 and the conclusion in Prov 9 for the entire rhetorical structure of Prov 1–9. The investigations on structure and content arrangement represent the approaches to the unity and continuity.

Rhetorical Strategies in the Persuasive Dimension

In the tradition of rhetorical criticism, the art of persuasion has been impacted by the work of Yehoshua Gitay.[14] Gitay is insightful when he indicates that

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of all discourse." Ibid., 49. Also see David Goodwin, "Rhetorical Criticism," *ECLT*, 174–8.

[14] See Gitay's works: *Prophecy and Persuasion*; *Isaiah and His Audience*; "A Study of Amos's Art of Speech: A Rhetorical Analysis of Amos 3:1–15," *CBQ* 42, 1980: 293–309; "Reflections on the Study of the Prophetic Discourse: The Question of Isaiah 1:2–20," *VT* 33, 1983: 207–21; "Rhetorical Criticism," in *To Each Its Own Meaning: An Introduction to Biblical Criticisms and their Application* (ed. S. L. McKenzie and S. R. Haynes; Louisville, Kanturkey: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1993), 135–49; and "Psalm 1 and the rhetoric of religious argumentation" in *Literary Structure and Rhetorical Strategies in the Hebrew Bible* (ed. L. J. de Regt, J. de Waard, and J. P. Fokkelman; Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 1996). Looking at the poetic discourses of Isaiah that utilizes figures of speech, metaphors, similes, word alliteration, and puns, Gitay makes clear his opinion: "Speakers use a variety of poetic devices in order to achieve a pragmatic goal, namely, to appeal to their listeners and to communicate effectively with them. Isaiah employs parables and recites poems. His obvious goal is to demonstrate his message vividly rather to

Ideally, the art of persuasion functions in a situation where there is no physical or external pressure. Persuasion involves choice and will. That is to say, the situation is one in which the other side has to be convinced without threatening or proclaiming judgment, but by appealing to free will and choice.[15]

This study will investigate how the father uses rhetorical skills to persuade the listening son to make proper choices.

The art of persuasion in Prov 1–9 demonstrates a vivid/effective communication between speaker and listener, that is, the father and the son. It is apparent that the father employs rhetorical devices such as repetition, alliteration, assonance, simile and metaphor to achieve his educational purpose.[16] If these issues are examined, additional support for the continuity and unity that exist in both Prov 1–7 and 8–9 will become manifest because both blocks show similar rhetorical devices.

In particular, this study will explore the three areas of stylistic elements, rhetorical type, and imagery devices to investigate how the father's rhetoric in Prov 1–7 continues and climaxes in Prov 8–9. The discussion of stylistic elements will focus on verbal systems, parallelism, clause, and sound. The studies of ethos and pathos will present judicial, deliberative and demonstrative types as used in the text. The issue of imagery devices will show how metaphorical language is used and explained, particularly in the

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deliver it briefly and simply." Gitay, *Isaiah and His Audience*, 3. Also see the relevant discussion in Phyllis Trible's opinion on rhetorical criticism in Trible, *Rhetorical Criticism*, 25–48.

[15] Gitay, *Prophecy and Persuasion*, 35. Gitay thought Deutero–Isaiah did not proclaim judgment or disaster, nor did he threaten. Using a great deal of debate, the goal of Deutero–Isaiah is to change listeners' attitude by appeals. Gitay emphasized that "The art of rhetoric is the art of choice. That is to say, the author or orator has to choose his arguments, the way in which they will be organized, and he also has to choose his words and the proper means of expression. Thus, all literary research which calls attention to the principles of selection used to appeal to the audience (or the reader) is a rhetorical study." Ibid., 36.

[16] See John M. Thompson, *The Form and Function of Proverbs in Ancient Israel* (The Hague: Mouton, 1974), 21–3. D. A. Garret gives an example that contains alliteration, "Look before you leap" (repeated initial consonants) and uses the proverb, "A stitch in time saves nine," to explain so–called assonance (repeated vowel sounds). Garrett, *Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs*, 38.

figure of wisdom.

Stylistic Elements

Stylistic elements are defined as linguistic elements of rhetorical style (*elocutio*)

which are used for achieving a persuasion.[17] In the rhetorical study of the Old Testament,

linguistic features are an important area that demonstrates the art of persuasion,[18] and

reflects the issue of style which is defined as "choice of appropriate words."[19] In this

issue, the author or orator chooses his arguments so that the linguistic style is associated

to "the art of choice,"[20] reflecting the rhetorical characteristics of the text.

Prov 1–9 is full of linguistic features such as volitional verbs (e.g., imperative,

cohortative, and jussive), adverbial clauses, parallelism, and sound. These features are

used by the speaker in Prov 1–9, and to help build his rhetoric throughout the discourses.

This investigation of linguistic style "is crucial in the process of textual composition,

since it is responsible for the manifestation of the text as text."[21]

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[17] Beside the content arrangement (thought sequence), a rhetorical style of the text also can be approached by some smaller evidences such as linguistic feature.

[18] Ivan J. Ball uses a rhetorical analysis on Zephaniah and provides the three dimensions to approach the text: (1) rhetorical features related to a line and words; (2) rhetorical features related to sets; (3) rhetorical features in sub–section, section, chapter and book. In his first dimension, Ball include sound qualities (alliteration, rhyme, onomatopoeia, paronomasia, and assonance), word collocations (chiasmus, repetition, relation of beginning and end of line, and position of names/the Divine name), metrical considerations (beats/word accents, syllables), grammatical considerations (exclamations, vocatives, imperatives, particles, and formulary expressions), quotations, and imagery (metaphors, similes, and allegory). All of these features belong to the study of linguistics, or precisely the art of persuasion. See the discussion in Ball, *A Rhetorical Study of Zephaniah*, 1–13.

[19] Trible, *Rhetorical Criticism*, 9. Trible has a further explanation: "Style (*elocutio*), whether grand, moderate, or simple, sought appropriate words for content." Ibid., 8.

[20] Gitay, *Prophecy and Persuasion*, 36. Gitay explained the art of choice and said "The art of rhetoric is the art of choice. That is to say, the author or the orator has to choose his arguments, the way in which they will be organized, and he also has to choose his words and the proper means of expression. Thus, all literary research which calls attention to the principles of selection used to appeal to the audience (or the reader) is a rhetorical study." Ibid.

[21] Wolfgang G. Müller, "Style" in *ER*, 745; also cf. the relevant discussion in 745–57.

Ethos

Ethos is defined as "persuasion through personal credibility, credentials, and good will." It "relies on aligning one's personal presence, beliefs, and projects with authorizing premises shared by the audience."[22] The issue of ethos is significant in Proverbs because it is one of the rhetorical approaches to "an interpretation of the admonition (in Proverbs)."[23] It reveals the role of the speaker and his interaction with audience.

Indeed, there is more than one speaker in Prov 1–9 (e.g., the father, Lady Wisdom, the strange woman and Dame Folly). The issue of ethos indicates how voices relate and impact each other. In fact, the knowledge of ethos illuminates the inside world of the speaker because "this knowledge enables the speaker to project a favorable self–image and to shape arguments in ways that accommodate differing audiences and occasions."[24]

This issue is built on the basis of what is proven in the structure, the content arrangement and the evidences of stylistic element in Prov 1–9. If the father's rhetoric is properly recognized in these areas, there should be a similar or same ethos (character or credibility of speaking person) existing among speakers. Regardless of the confusion caused by the linguistic similarity and dissimilarity on the ethos[25] and some improper

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[22] David S. Kaufer, Brian S. Butler, and Suguru Ishizaki, *Power of Words* (Norwood, N.J.: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 2004), 119. Kaufer, Butler and Ishizake also explain ethos this way: "A standard locution for summoning this ethos in the micro world of language is the as a + *role identity* construction, linking the speaker's role as an individual conduit of public credibility. Speakers use this construction to justify why they worthy individual representatives of public ideals or good public dealers on matters that might ordinarily remain in the realm of the personal." (italic these authors') Ibid.

[23] Nel, *The Structure and Ethos of the Wisdom Admonitions of the Wisdom Admonitions in Proverbs*, 83. Nel identifies several different aspects of the ethos of wisdom in Prov 1–9: "the importance of the admonition, the authority of wisdom, the kind of knowledge provided in the instruction of wisdom, wisdom's relation to the law and wisdom's boundary and goal within the framework of the *yir'at Jahweh*." Ibid., 101.

[24] James S. Baumlin, "Ethos" *ER*, 263 and also see the relevant discussion in 263–77.

[25] The ethos of speaker is usually confused in Prov 1–9 because of the linguistic similarity and dissimilarity. Concerning the similarity and dissimilarity of terminology in Prov 1–9, Whybray indicates that "It is remarkable–and no satisfactory explanation has been found for this–that although in every case

explanation,[26] the ethos that is directly expressed in the fatherly discourses is the same with what personified Wisdom presents.

Pathos

Pathos is defined as persuasion that "occurs as a mode of artistic proof when the minds of the audience are moved to emotion: they will come to a different conclusion, for example when they are angry than when pleased."[27] While pathos is significant to a rhetorical study, still this term "has occasioned the greatest amount of controversy."[28] This study employs Kennedy's definition to develop its rhetorical analysis in Prov 1–9.[29]

This study proposes that the listeners in both Prov 1–7 and 8–9 are the same because of the same pathos. To search for the pathos of a speech involves recognizing who is the reader/listener and what emotion a speech is about to rouse.

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the language used is similar, it is never quite identical: a remarkable number of synonyms is used, and often the same words occur in slightly different combination." Whybray, *Proverbs*, 23–4.

[26] Pemberton, *The Rhetoric of the Father*, 283. Pemberton thought that his rhetorical patterns within the ethos and pathos of the lectures (the fatherly discourses) offered a satisfactory explanation for the mystery of linguistic complication (i.e., similarity and dissimilarity) but they do not. For example, the same ethos that the speaking father uses to warn of the destruction of the opponent (1:8–19) can also be found in this passage of wisdom material (9:13–18). In Pemberton's categorization, this ethos that exists in the first fatherly discourse (1:8–19) belongs to the rhetoric of "the calls to apprenticeship." See ibid., 87–108 and 285–287. Pemberton's thesis discards the value of the father's comments in Prov 8–9 and the father's rhetoric behind the personified figures (Lady Wisdom and Dame Folly). Therefore, Pemberton is unable to extend his assumption into the final passages of Prov 1–9.

[27] Kennedy, *Classical Rhetoric & Its Christian and Secular Tradition from Ancient to Modern Times*, 82.

[28] José A. Mayoral, "Pathos" *ER*, 554 and also see relevant discussion in 554–69. Mayoral survey the different approaches of this term in different ages, and said: "The great currency of the term derives from Aristotle's *Rhetoric*, in which he identifies pathos as one of three principal sources for rhetorical proofs, along with *ēthos* and *logos*. But the concern for *pathos* (by whatever name) long predates Aristotle, and the precise understanding of the term after Aristotle changes with time and culture. For some rhetors, the term conveys little more than the sense that an auditor's state of mind can cloud or supersede his rational capacities of making decisions. For others, the term invites a thorough analysis of the human soul and its broader relations to language and perception." (555, italic Mayoral's)

[29] Ibid.

Imagery Devices

Imagery devices are defined as expressions that are used in order to achieve a persuasive effect.[30] This issue reflects rhetorical style, namely the "use of figures and tropes."[31] Figures and tropes are expressions of imagery which enable "the author to communicate his message in fewer words."[32] This area has to be discussed separately because the Book of Proverbs, and in particular the section of Prov 1–9, is full of imagery expressions of rhetorical value which are designed for achieving persuasive effects.[33]

Metaphorical images express the different concerns of life (style, value, and judgment).[34] For stance, the "cistern" in Prov 5:15 is a metaphorical image and equivalent to one's own wife.[35] Both blocks of Prov 1–7 and Prov 8–9, contain the image of the "way" (דֶּרֶךְ, 30 times in total in Prov 1–9, 24 times in chapters 1–7 and 6 times in

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[30] Gitay explained the effect of the text and said: "Rhetorical criticism focuses on the literary work as communication. Hence, in utilizing rhetorical criticism as an interpretive tool, one is no longer focusing only the meaning of the text, but also on its *effect*. In other words, a rhetorical utterance is pragmatic." (italic Gitay's) Gitay, *Prophecy and Persuasion*, 42. Literary devices in Prov 1–9 can't be understood simply through its superficial or literal meaning for it intends to relate something behind the text in order to create an effect for the listener/reader. For instance, the cistern (5:15) is the place for preserving water but here is implied metaphorically by one's own wife. The effect the speaker tries to inspire is to keep/cherish one's own spouse or marriage as a cistern keeps water.

[31] Ibid., 9.

[32] Waltke, *The Book of Proverbs Chapters 1–15*, 39.

[33] For instance, personification (wisdom) is probably the most important imagery expression in Prov 1–9. Camp describes the effect of personification this way: "Considered from a grammatical point of view, personification has the effect of making proper nouns out of common nouns and thereby making them 'one–member class nouns.' Personification thus stylistically stresses the unity of the subject." Camp, *Wisdom and the Feminine in the Book of Proverbs*, 214.

[34] For instance, "Sheol" (שְׁאוֹל) or "pit" (בּוֹר) can be used as a trope (figuratively) for those evildoers to swallow the innocent (Prov 1:12). There are "the strange woman" (זָרָה) and "the foreign seductress" (נָכְרִיָּה), whose house leads down to death (מָוֶת), and whose path ends in the shades (רְפָאִים) (Prov 2:18). The banquet provided by Dame Folly is portrayed in the depths of hell (בְּעִמְקֵי שְׁאוֹל, Prov 9:18). Metaphorically, the speaking father is able to show what will result from following the path of Dame Folly: "But he does not know that the dead are there, that her guests are in the depths of Sheol" (Prov 9:18). Therefore the father's rhetoric, for the sake of persuasion, uses metaphorical similarity to explain what could happen to the listener in real world.

[35] Clifford indicates that "Verse 15 (5:15) commands sexual relationships to be restricted to one's own wife… In the love language of the poem (5:15–19), the wife is portrayed as unique, like no one else, to be treasured for herself alone, to be shared with no other." Clifford, *Proverbs*, 71–2.

chapters 8–9), "path" (נָתִיב, 5 times in total in Prov 1–9, 3 times in chapters 1–7 and 2 in

chapter 8),[36] "track" (מַעְגַּל, 7 times in total in chapters 1–7), "rubies or corals" (פְּנִינִים, 1

time in 3:15 and 1 time in 8:11), and "silver" (כֶּסֶף, 3 times in chapters 1–7 and 2 times in

chapter 8). These imagery devices transfer from one referent to the other.[37] In other

words, the expression of imagery is expected to proceed in an indirect manner in order to

achieve a communication between speaker and listener. These images from the father's

rhetoric serve to guide the audience into a world of imagination and prepare a willing

heart for the father's exhortations.

In order to impress the listener, considering imagery is one way of seeing how the

father's rhetoric functions metaphorically and indirectly. Imagination is produced by this

literary skill during the reading of the text, and makes an expectable and reachable

distance between the speaker and listener so that the understanding of the text has to be

achieved with more effort of association, and thus more pleasure. In other words, the

speaker doesn't appeal to a direct and easy comprehension, but he prefers to make his

listener imagine what is said. When the imagery language, such as path, way, gold or

Lady Wisdom, is heard in the ears of the listener, the listener is encouraged to remove the

cover of imagery and reach the true meaning behind the image. The listener will become

more willing to accept the speaker's lecture because it is the listener himself who makes

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[36] According to Crenshaw, "Another image that plays an important part in the vocabulary of Israel's sages who composed the book of Proverbs is the path or way to life. The significance of this terminology depends on the double sense with which the word for way was used for path and sovereignty." Ibid., 66–7. See also Norman Habel, "The Symbolism of Wisdom in Proverbs 1–9," *Int* 26 (1972): 131–57.

[37] The meaning of a metaphor can not be understood literally because it always associates to a change. Caird points out: "Changes through habitual denotation occur most frequently among metaphors. A metaphor is the transference of a term from one referent with it naturally belongs to a second referent, in order that the second may be illuminated by comparison with the first or by being 'seen as' the first." George B. Caird, *The Language and Imagery of the Bible* (2nd ed., Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1997), 66.

the move toward learning according to his own will.

Indeed, the portrayal of personified Wisdom, the ultimate metaphor in Prov 1–9, is the most important key of the demonstration of the father's rhetoric of Prov 1–7 as it continues and climaxes in Prov 8–9. Wisdom is metaphorically made a speaking figure and is rhetorically received in the hearing of the listener not only in Prov 8–9 but also in Prov 1–7.[38] Her existence as a metaphorical device is accepted in the scholarship of Prov 1–9[39] because only this approach can avoid the extremity of forcing an unbalanced reading as form criticism does to support an Ancient–Near–East connection (e.g., wisdom=*Maat*). Indeed the midrash style of personified Wisdom is used by the speaking father to advance his rationale to achieve what he said in the preceding content (fatherly

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[38] In the description of Prov 1–7, wisdom is personified by the mouth of the father before she is personified in chapters 8–9. The speaking father already mentions the existence of personified Wisdom when he directly addresses his son. The wisdom that is introduced can be received or heard by man (Prov 1:2; 2:2; 4:5, 7; 5:1), be stored, found or given (Prov 2:6–7, 3:13, 22), and enter the human heart (Prov 2:10), become a sister (or bride) of man (Prov 7:4) and be a tree of life (Prov 3:18). Obviously personified Wisdom becomes a metaphorical / rhetorical device of the father's rhetoric to move the reading of the text forward. As Leo G. Perdue has observed, "What is most striking about the feminization of wisdom is the personification of Woman Wisdom as a *metaphor*, along with her opponent, Woman Folly. As already noted, in the four didactic poems on Woman Wisdom (Prov 1:20–33; 3:13–20; 8:1–36; and 9:1–18) she is presented as the instrument by which God created the earth, the daughter in whom he takes delight, the queen of heaven who elects kings and dispenses wealth and success to her royal devotees, the goddess who inaugurates her school of instruction, and the sage whose teaching brings life to her followers." (italics by mine) Perdue, *Proverbs*, 48; also see 36–9 and 48–51.

[39] Milton P. Horne indicates that "One of the framing devices for the collection of Proverbs is the image of wisdom as a woman. By bringing together these two notions, the ancient sages created a metaphor whereby each part of the metaphor illuminated the other. The reader's task is to ask about ancient social roles of women that might illuminate the sage's understanding of wisdom. And vice versa, one must ask what is known about ancient Israelite wisdom that helps to appreciate ancient concepts of the feminine." Horne, *Proverbs – Ecclesiastes*, 37. Leeuwen also considers, "According to the fact that wisdom relates to humankind as woman to man, and that Yahweh relates to Israel as husband to wife, is a metaphoric representation of reality whose depths remain unplumbed" Van Leeuwen *Proverbs*, 36. C. Hassell Bullock is one of those supporters when he also shares that "The personification of wisdom in chapter 8–9 constitutes another dimension of wisdom in Proverbs that is more thought provoking. Although the descriptions in 1:20–22 and chapters 2–3 may be largely metaphorical, as in Job 28, we do have an example of personification in chapters 8–9, where wisdom is personified as a woman." Bullock, *An Introduction to the Poetic Books of the Old Testament*, 157. David Bland also thought there are three views for personified Wisdom: (1) Wisdom is a hypostasis of Yahweh; (2) Wisdom is fully and equally God and not simply an aspect (hypostasis) of god; (3) Woman Wisdom is purely a literary device. See Bland, *Proverbs, Ecclesiastes & Song of Songs*, 47–9. Bland prefers the third possibility and indicates that "I believe it (the literary device) is best to interpret Woman Wisdom as personification (a literary device) that expresses a way in which God communicates with humans." Ibid., 48.

discourses)[40] so that in the world of the speaker's imagination,[41] "an aesthetically nuanced set of rhetorical devices" (personified Wisdom) can awaken the listener's receptivity to teaching.[42] This is the reason why the father's rhetoric uses personified Wisdom for a climax (chapter 8) and a conclusion of choosing (chapter 9).

Summary

The rhetorical strategies that this study adopts to approach Prov 1–9 in the persuasive dimension illustrates the microscopic evidences of stylistic elements, ethos, pathos and imagery devices to illustrate how the father's rhetoric in Prov 1–7 continues and climaxes in Prov 8–9. Indeed, all of the discussions stand for the endeavors to trace the rhetorical styles and skills of the original author or editor. Assuming that the structure and content arrangement in Prov 1–9 are rhetorically/intentionally designed for a whole, there must be smaller evidences to show the same reality. If there is the consistency in using language, sound, ethos, pathos, and imagery devices in both Prov 1–7 and 8–9; then Prov 8–9 becomes a continuation of Prov 1–7 and the entire block of Prov 1–9 is an

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[40] Fox points out, "The personification poems in Prov 1–8 treat Wisdom in the same way that the midrash does Torah. In fact, the personification interludes are themselves a sort of midrash–homiletic exploration and exposition–on the earlier texts of Proverbs, especially the Ten Lectures. Lady Wisdom is indeed godlike, but that is *a literary guise*, and we should grant the author and readers the literary competency needed to use and read *tropes* in an appropriate manner." (Italics by this author) Fox, *Proverbs 1–9*, 354. If Fox's opinion is correct, the midrash style of the wisdom materials (chapters 8–9) is not supposed to be separated from the block of Prov 1–7 because the purpose of these materials is to form a climax (chapter 8) and corresponds to what the father says in the preceding content.

[41] Concerning the metaphor and the imagination in Prov 1–9, Perdue states his opinion that "Metaphors for God in Proverbs range from a divine judge who sits in judgment of human behavior, to an artisan engaged in creating a work of beauty and delight, to a parent who conceives or impregnates and then gives birth to and raises a child, to a teacher who instructs students in the traditions of prudence and life. Metaphors like these engage the imagination and allow divine nature and activity to be construed in ways that make sense of who and what God is and does." Perdue, *Proverbs*, 38–9.

[42] Perdue indicates that "It is true that *images* and *metaphors* stand at the center of sapiential thinking and that that the discourse of the sages embodies and articulates the meaning of images and metaphors. Indeed, the content of the image is set forth and explored. But the discourse provides not straightforward definition but rather an aesthetically nuanced set of rhetorical devices (e.g. similarity of sounds, antithesis, comparison) that awaken in the hearer a receptivity to teaching through the engagement of both content and beauty." (italics mine) Ibid., 35.

integral whole.

Chapter Summary

The structure and reading of the text in Prov 1–9 depend on a unifying perspective to demonstrate its continuity. As has been discussed, the father's rhetoric is the perspective provided by the author or editor of Prov 1–9 to organize both the macroscopic features (structure and content arrangement) and microscopic expression (stylistic elements, ethos, pathos and imagery devices) in the text. In other words, the father's rhetoric is designed to give the unifying perspective to organize the entire text of Prov 1–9.

In the compositional (macroscopic) dimension, the investigation of the structure provides a firm foundation for the wholeness of the entire text in Prov 1–9. That is, the unity is implied in the rhetorical prologue (1:1–7), confirmed in the ten fatherly discourses (1:8–7:27), and supported in the wisdom materials (8:1–9:18). Without the father's rhetoric in Prov 1–7, the importance and place of Prov 8–9 is obscure; and without the climax (and conclusion) in Prov8–9, the block of Prov 1–7 becomes pointless and scattered.

In the persuasive (microscopic) dimension, there is much evidence showing the continuity in both Prov 1–7 and 8–9. The stylistic elements demonstrate that the father's rhetoric intentionally and continually uses similar or same linguistic skills in both Prov 1–7 and 8–9. The investigation of ethos illustrates that the same ethos is intended in the speaking father (Prov 1–7) and personified Wisdom (Prov 8–9). The approach of pathos indicates that the same listener and listener's emotion are targeted in both Prov 1–7 and 8–9, although the different voices are heard (father's/wisdom's). On the basis of a

unifying intention, the imagery devices in Prov 1–7 and 8–9 also illuminate the strong connection of these two blocks through the imagery language; especially personified Wisdom is a metaphorical image.

The father's rhetoric in Prov 1–7 continues and climaxes in Prov 8–9 as long as this rhetoric is appropriately recognized. The father directly speaks to the son in the fatherly discourse (Prov 1–7); and in an indirect manner, the father continues his instruction through the lips of personified Wisdom (Prov 8–9).

CHAPTER FIVE

COMPOSITIONAL DIMENSION: STRUCTURE AND CONTENT ARRANGEMENT OF THE FATHER'S RHETORIC

The previous chapters gave an overview of rhetorical criticism and the rhetorical strategies, both in the compositional and the persuasive dimension, which this study will use to investigate the structure and reading of Prov 1–9. It is necessary to trace these blueprints to see how every part of these nine chapters is pieced together. If apparent discontinuities, in particular the discontinuities in Prov 8–9, are interpreted in the light of the father's rhetoric in Prov 1–7, then this investigation can show that the father's rhetoric in Prov 1–7 continues and climaxes in Prov 8–9, thus demonstrating the unity in Prov 1–9. Step by step this study will present how this is possible.

This chapter is divided into two major sections: (1) an examination of how the father's rhetoric works in the *structure* of Prov 1–9; (2) an examination of how the father's rhetoric works in the *content arrangement* of Prov 1–9. In the first section, the ten fatherly discourses of Prov 1–7 are divided into two halves with different emphases (wisdom–centered and evil–focused) and discussed according to their repetitions and balances/symmetries. Afterward the wisdom materials in Prov 8–9 are analyzed to demonstrate how these materials continue the previous rhetoric (that is, the father's rhetoric) and reach the final climax for Prov 1–9.

In the second section of this chapter, the examination of content arrangement focuses on three perspectives (a progressive perspective, a contrastive perspective and a

father's comment perspective). These perspectives, which stand on the basis of the structure, remain on the thematic sequence in Prov 1–9.

Structure of the Father's Rhetoric

This section introduces three theories on the issue of structure, those of Patrick W. Skehan, Michael V. Fox and Bruce K. Waltke. Afterward a new rhetorical reconstruction of the text will prove the thesis that the father's rhetoric in Prov 1–7 continues and climaxes in Prov 8–9, thus supporting the unity in Prov 1–9.

In an overall sense, balance and symmetry characterize the structure of Prov 1–9. Concerning the composition of Prov 1–9, Robert Alter comments: "The didactic poet does not want to set up eddies and undercurrents in the unruffled flow of his language, because the wisdom itself derives from a sense of balanced order, confident distinction, assured consequence for specific acts and moral stances."[1] Here this study will attempt to trace the balance/symmetry in the structure of Proverbs 1–9.

It is notable that the text of Proverbs 1–9 is composed of both poetry and discourse; and indeed, both poetry and discourse appear in the same textual units (e.g., in each of the ten fatherly discourses). To analyze such a combination text as Prov 1–9 "involves a hypothetic reconstruction of the original performance setting, as nearly as this can be determined, in order to specify the rhetorical dynamics of the passage in terms of its formal, semantic, and pragmatic significance in relation to the primary receptor group for whom the message was composed."[2] Therefore a rhetorical study of the structure of

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[1] Robert Alter. *The Art of Biblical Poetry* (New York: Basic Books, 1985), 164.

[2] Ernst R. Wendland, "The Discourse Analysis of Hebrew Poetry: A Procedural Outline" in *Discourse Perspectives on Hebrew Poetry in the Scriptures* (UBSMon 7, ed. Ernst R. Wendland; New York: United Bible Societies, 1994), 1.

discourse–poetry must be "progressive, systematic, and comprehensive."[3] According to these ideas, the following possibilities on structure are evaluated one by one.

Three Possibilities on Structure

There are three theories that attempt to describe the structure of Prov 1–9. These theories proposed by Skehan, Fox and Waltke demonstrate how the structure is built by the various rationale. Skehan's formal approach lays the entire structure of Prov 1–9 upon an implication of the text in 9:1, (that is "the seven pillars"). Fox employs the rhetorical method to manage as much as where he considers consistent (the fatherly discourses) or non–consistent (the wisdom poems) in the structure. Waltke's structuralism sees Prov 1–9 as a large chiastic structure with the significance of the father's teaching revealed in the middle (3:1–4:27 and 5:1–6:35). Considering the features of both poetry and discourse of Prov 1–9, these three scholars provide the three various styles of the structure for the text of Prov 1–9.

(1) Skehan and His Seven Pillars

As a result of an interest in the numbers of Proverbs,[4] Skehan believes that "the

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[3] Ibid., 1.

[4] According to the systematic patterns of number that exist in the various sections, Skehan considers the entire Book of Proverbs achieved by one sole editor. He examines the numbers of line in the four sections of the Book of Proverbs: Part I. Chapters 1–9 (235 lines); Part II. Solomonic collection, 10:1–22:16 (375 lines); Part III. Sayings of wise men, 22:17–24:34 (97 lines); Part IV. Hezekiah collection, 25–29 (139 lines); Appended Materials. (86 lines, that is, 6:1–19 [20 lines] + ch.30 [36 lines] + ch. 31 [30 lines]). The total sum of these sections is 932 (lines). Compared to the close numerical value of the letters in the Hebrew names in Prov 1:1, the total number is 930 (the proverbs of SOLOMON [שלמה]: 375 + son of DAVID [דוד]: 14 + King of ISRAEL [ישראל]:541), which Skehan considers not an accident but the evidence of the unity of the Book of Proverbs. Skehan insists: "If this calvulation has any value, we have an internal witness in the text of the book itself that it is integral according to the scope planed for it by one sole editor, within two lines of its original length." Skehan, *Studies in Israelite Poetry and Wisdom*, 15; also see the Skenhan's theory in 15–26 and in Skenhan, "A Single Editor for the Whole Book of Proverbs," 115–30.

Book of Proverbs is the house of Wisdom"[5] and the structure of Prov 1–9 is constituted

by the seven main columns, that is, the seven pillars in Prov 9:1: "Wisdom has built her

house, she has hewn out her seven pillars (עַמּוּדֶיהָ שִׁבְעָה)." This seven–pillar or seven–

column theory was postulated in 1947 for the first time and was modified twenty years

later.[6] Here is the diagram of the structure:[7]

Table 1. Structure of Proverbs 1–9 according to Skehan

Proverbs 1-9

				7:7-27	6:20,21; 6:23-7;6	5:1-19; 6:22; 5:20	4:10-27; 5:21-23	4:1-9; 3:13-24; 3:35	3:1-12, 25-34	2:1-22					
			8:1-21								6:1-19				
		8:22-36										1:20-33			
	9:1-11												1:8-19		
9:12-18														1:2-7	
(7)	(11)	(15)	(20)	(22)	(22)	(22)	(22)	(22)	(22)	(22)	(20)	(15)	(11)	(6)	lines
15	14	13	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	cols.

Skehan sees Prov 1 and 8–9 as a framework and Prov 2–7 as composed of seven

poems (the seven columns). "The central feature of Prov 1–9 is a structure of seven 22–

line columns, in both the literary and the architectural sense."[8] He considers this structure

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[5] Skehan, *Studies in Israelite Poetry and Wisdom*, 27; "Wisdom's House," 162. Skehan explains: "That is to say, its author–compiler–designer (for he was all three) wrote the Hebrew text of his composition in such a way that its layout in the columns of his scroll visible showed forth the design of a house, which he himself identified (Prov 9:1) as Wisdom's House." Ibid.

[6] See Skehan, "The Seven Columns of Wisdom's House in Proverbs 1–9," 190–8 and *Studies in Israelite Poetry and Wisdom*, 9–14.

[7] Ibid., 29.

[8] Skehan, "Wisdom's House," 28. For instance, Skehan makes Prov 2 as an example and indicates: "The most striking clue to this is the actual first column, ch. 2. It is textually without serious difficulties; and it is acknowledged by almost all students of the Book of Proverbs to be a complete and orderly unity. That it is 22 lines long is significant: this is the number of letters in the Hebrew alphabet, and the structure of the poem is governed by a plan based on this fact. It has six stanzas, of 4, 4, 3 and again 4, 4, and 3 verses. The first stanza is signed with the letter *aleph*: not in the vocative *bᵉnî* with which the stanza opens, but in the *'im* which follows immediately." Skehan, *Studies in Israelite Poetry and Wisdom*, 9.

to be imitating Solomon's Temple with the three–story annex.[9] Most important is the fact

that this theory of structure, which reflects both the background of Solomon's temple and

a literary arrangement among lines and columns, shows the unity of the text.

Skehan's architectural approach of the structure faces some challenges. First, the

thematic symmetry of the text is unbalanced according to his overall arrangement.[10]

Second, the locations of genre become inconsistent, easily causing misunderstanding.[11]

Third, Skehan's approach of the seven pillars might lose the meaning that the text intends

to convey.[12] Skehan's structure on Prov 1–9 may deal with the problem of unity to a

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[9] According to Skehan, "In the temple of Solomon there was an exterior 'annex' 3 stories high running around the sides and back of main building. It height is not specified in MT, or rather, the '5 cubits' of 1 Kgs 6:10 applies only to the bottom story. The author of Prov represented such an annex in his two–dimensional elevation by setting out the heights of its 3 stories side by side, in an ascending arrangement in cols. 1–3, and in a symmetrical descending arrangement in cols. 13–15. Cols. 4 and 12, also separate from the 7 pillars of the porch (cols. 5–11), were again symmetrically disposed to give both the depth (1 unit out of 20 for the whole house) and interior height (20 lines, or 'cubits') of the porch" Ibid., 27.

[10] In order to fit in his line arrangement, Skehan arbitrarily breaks ch. 9 into column 14 (9:1–11, 11 lines) and column 15 (9:12–18, 7 lines) in order to correspond to column 2 (1:8–19, 11 lines) and column 1 (1:2–7, 7 lines). This arbitrary arrangement doesn't recognize the thematic unbalance and the tripartite symmetry in ch. 9 (9:1–6; 7–12; 13–18). For instance, column 15 that corresponds the prologue in column 1 is *not* the epilogue; the true epilogue is in Prov 9:7–12. And column 4 (6:1–19) is misplaced according to its textual sequence. Why not locate column 4 among the seven pillars or poems? Cf. Table One above in 65.

[11] For example, Skehan excludes the section of Prov 1:8–19 (column 3) out of the seven main pillars/poems and causes confusion. This passage is definitely a piece of fatherly discourse in common with the rest of the fatherly discourses (e.g., vocative, imperative, wisdom teaching, speaker–to–listener relationship and etc.). If the block of columns 12–15 (Prov 8–9), chiefly the wisdom poems, are developed in sequence, why are the block of columns 1–4 (Prov 1:2–7, 8–19, 20–33; 6:1–19), its counterpart, inconsistent? This misplacing and misrecognition easily cause misunderstanding.

[12] For fear that the implication of Prov 9:1 might lose the focus which the text intends to convey, Greenfield challenges Skehan's theory in the archeological and textual dimensions. First, there is no archeological support for the seven columns or pillars. Greenfield indicates: "However, unless we assume that the number seven was taken as the ideal round number, we may properly ask, was a house with seven column pillars standard–or even frequent–in the ancient Near East? The answer, based on a survey of the available material and discussion with archaeologists is an unequivocal 'no'. " Jonas C. Greenfield, "The Seven Pillars of Wisdom (Prov 9:1)–A Mistranslation" *JQR* (1985):13–4 and also cf. 13–20. Second, the textual difficulty of the number seven can be approached in a different way. Greenfield suggests: "Returning now to Prov 9:1, I propose to translate this verse as 'Wisdom has built her house, The Seven have set its foundations.' The textual problem may be solved in the following manner. The original text, to the extent that it can be recovered, reads חכמת בנת בתה // חצב עמדיה שבעת. The form הצב was multivalent and could have been read as either masculine or feminine, singular or plural; here it was to have been read as masculine plural, i.e., *hiṣṣībū*. The *hif'il* of *nsb* rather than the qal of *hsb* is widely accepted as the proper reading here based on the Septuagint's ὑπήρεισε and Syriac *'aqīmat*. The הצבה of the Masoretic text may

limited extent, but it ignores the continuity/consistence that the text intends to convey.

That is to say, the section of Prov 1–7 becomes inconsistent, and its structure does not

continue into Prov 8–9.

(2) Fox and His Tripartite Formula

Following Plöger's rhetorical theory,[13] Fox postulates a tripartite formula

(exordium, lesson, and conclusion) for the ten father–son lectures (discourses) in Prov 1–

9.[14] He states, "The lectures are constructed according to a careful tripartite design, as

described previously. Their author shows a concern for schematic organization."[15]

According to Fox, the structure of Prov 1–9 contains the ten father–son lectures of a

tripartite formula, the five interludes and some insertions as follows:

Table 2: Structure of Prov 1–9 according to Fox[16]

Prologue: 1:1–7		
Ten Father–Son Lectures: I. 1:8–19; II. 2:1–22; III. 3:1–12; IV. 3:21–35; V. 4:1–9; VI. 4:10–19; VII. 4:20–27; VIII. 5:1–23; IX. 6:20–35; X. 7:1–27	Five Interludes: A. 1:20–33; B. 3:13–20; C. 6:1–19; D. 8:1–36; E. 9:1–6+11, 13–18	Minor Insertions: 3:3a; 4:27a, 27b; 6:8a–8c, 11a; 8:13a, 19; 9:7–10, 12

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be explained bythe similarity of *he* and *het* in the Herodian book–hand. The text was misunderstood in the course of transmission and the tradition of seven wise men was forgotten. The pillars were set not by 'the seven'–the embodiment of Wisdom –but by Wisdom herself and hsd/hsd was read as a third person feminine singular verb, thus changing, I would submit, the meaning of the verse. That is how the legend of the seven pillars of wisdom came into being." Ibid., 20.

[13] See Plöger's tripartite theory (exordium–lesson–conclusion) in Plöger, *Sprüche Salomos*, 23–4.

[14] The tripartite formula includes the following three parts. (1) *Exordium*.The introduction to a *lesson*, comprising: (a) an address to the son or sons; (b) an exhortation to hear and remember the teachings; (c) a motivation. (2) *Lesson*. The body of the teaching, imparting the message peculiar to the lecture (e. g. "My son, if criminals lure you, don't give in . . . for their feet rush to harm, make haste to shed blood" [1:10–16]). (3) *Conclusion*. A summary statement generalizing the teaching of the *lesson*. The *conclusion* sometimes ends with a capstone (e.g. "This is what happens to everyone who grasps ill–gotten gain: it robs him who holds it of life" [1:19]). See Fox, *Proverbs 1–9*, 322–4 and also 44–9.

[15] Ibid., 327; also cf. 328.

[16] Ibid., 322–4 and also 44–9.

According to this structure, Prov 1–9 is not a unified composition except for the rhetorical organization using a tripartite formula in the ten father–son lectures;[17] and the father's rhetoric of the father–son lectures (Prov 1–7) does not continue in the wisdom poems (Prov 8–9). Fox criticizes Whybray for falling short of the unity "as a whole,"[18] but the same weakness comes up in his own theory because the idea of insertions means independence and brokenness,[19] as does that of interludes.[20] How could the listener of these discourses make unified sense of different materials (e.g. Prov 1:20–33; 4:1–9 [plural vocatives]; 6:1–19 [without this tripartite formula]) and to the different passages of Prov 8–9, namely the wisdom–based poems? Is there more than one kind of rhetoric in Prov 1–9? If so, what is the relationship among these various kinds of rhetoric? Fox doesn't answer these questions. His consistency/continuity of structure only works in the fatherly materials and must disregard "interludes" and "minor insertions," thus breaking

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[17] Although the ten father–son lectures show a schematic organization, Fox still insists that "it would be *unlike* such an author to create and then disrupt a neat set of ten similar units by dispersing five passages (five interludes) of very different character in his composition. Their location of these passages has its own logic, but this is *not* an extension of the logic of the lectures." Ibid., 327 (italic and parenthesis mine); also cf. 328.

[18] Whybray's theory is questioned by Fox who indicates that "Identifying additions and separating compositional layers requires locating the seams: syntactic roughness and incompatibilities in conception that run counter to the purpose of the unit *as a whole*." Ibid., 322 (italics mine).

[19] Fox's treating the passages like insertions leads to their independence and breaking apart from the text. For instance, he considers that Prov3:3a is an insertion and breaks it from its context because וֶאֱמֶת חֶסֶד (kindness and faithfulness) refers to God's unchangeable love toward humanity, and the two covenantal attitudes (חֶסֶד וֶאֱמֶת) are not supposed to abandon the son but rather the son abandons them. See Fox, *Proverbs 1–9*, 144–45. Waltke criticizes, "however, he (Fox) has to posit against normal rules of composition that 'bind them' in verset B refers not to the parallel and nearest antecedent *hesed we ᵉemet*, but not to teaching and commandments in v.1." Waltke, *The Book of Proverbs Chapters 1–15*, 241. In fact, the metonymy of "kindness and faithfulness" (חֶסֶד וֶאֱמֶת) here simply refers to human ethics and its works. The same phrase that appears in Prov 16:6 and 20:28 also support this idea.

[20] The so–called "interlude" also implies insertion. That is, those wisdom materials cannot fit in the entire text of Prov 1–9 as the reading experience proceeds. In fact, they are not interludes at all but the fabric of the father's rhetoric. For example, Prov 6:1–9 which Fox accepts as an interlude starts with the same "בְּנִי" ("my son"), and does not differ from the rest of the fatherly discourses. The text of Prov6:1–19 is excluded because it can not fit in the triple mode of exordium–lesson–conclusion that Fox uses to define each of the ten fatherly discourses.

the unity of Prov 1–9.

(3) Waltke and His Concentric Chiasmus

Adopting a different strategy from Fox's theory, Bruce K. Waltke suggests a

concentric–chiastic structure for the entire text of Prov 1–9, as shown in the table below.

Table 3. Waltke's Concentric Chiasmus in Structure[21]

A Rival invitations of the father and the gang to the son	1:8–19
B Wisdom's rebuke of the gullible	1:20–33
C Janus: The father's command to heed teaching as a safeguard against evil men and the unchaste wife	2:1–22
D The father's commands to heed teaching	3:1–4:27
D' The father's warnings against the unchaste wife	5:1–6:35
C' Janus: The father's warnings against Wisdom's rival	7:1–27
B' Wisdom's invitation to the gullible	8:1–36
A' Rival invitations of Wisdom and the foolish woman to the gullible	9:1–18

There are four echoing pairs (A/A', B/B', C/C', D/D') in the structure and each pair

functions differently in its position.[22] The whole structure is centered by the pair D/D'

(3:1–4:27 and 5:1–6:35), which "combine the father's commend to his son to heed his

instructions with his warnings against the seduction of wicked men and women."[23] This

pair of nearly equal length demonstrates a chiastic pattern,[24] and emphasizes the

significance of the teaching of wisdom.

Waltke's effort surpasses Plöger and Fox, and covers the entire landscape of

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[21] Ibid., 12–13.

[22] The pair A/A' "frame the prologue (Prov 1–9) with two invitations, from the wise parents (1:8–9) over against that from wicked men (1:10–19) and from Woman Wisdom over against that of the foolish woman (9:1–6, 13–18)." Ibid., 12. The pair B/B' "uniquely personify Solomon's wisdom as a heavenly being, and both uniquely address the gullible at the city gate." Ibid., 13. The pair C/C' "function as transitions," and play the role of Janus (two–side) to their context. Ibid, 13.

[23] Ibid.

[24] Waltke explains: "The admonitions to heed the parents' teaching (3:1–26; 4:1–27) circle a pivot of negative commands pertaining to neighbors, especially the violent man (3:27–35). So also the warnings against the adulteress (5:1–23; 6:20–35) circle a pivot of negative commands warning against the three progressively inferior types of men (6:1–19)." Ibid.

Proverbs 1–9 without ignoring selective portions. This rhetorical pattern draws all attention to the central part (D/D'), where the father's teaching dominates the rest of the portions. Indeed the role of speaker (the father) is supposed to be the focus and the literary force of this speaker extends from the beginning to the end (particularly in chapters 8–9). However, the continuity is lost somewhat in this pattern because the various speaking roles (the father and wisdom) are mixed up. Without a proper separation of different portions, the literary design showing the progressive mode of the wisdom lessons (from easy–to–learn to hard–to–learn mode) is lost; and the rhetorical intention of contrast between wisdom and anti–wisdom becomes invisible.

The concentric structure also lacks textual/rhetorical support, for instance, some textual or rhetorical marker like בְּנִי ("my son") and שְׁמַע ("listen"). In fact, there is not even a significant marker (words or phrases) to distinguish the central part from the rest. The climax of Prov 8 loses its value, and the conclusion which Prov 9 represents does not work as expected. The listener of the fatherly discourses will have a hard time following this concentric structure.

Thus this study sees that Skehan, Fox and Waltke put forward three possibilities for the structure of Prov 1–9. These scholars either provide the unity for Prov 1–9 (Skehan and Waltke) or partially focus the continuity of the text (Fox),[25] thus producing the various results on structure. These theories of structure are more or less systematic and comprehensive, but they are definitely not *progressive* according to an appropriate

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[25] Although Fox focuses on the father–son lectures by using the tripartite formula, this rhetoric only remains in Prov 1–7 and doesn't continue in the interludes/insertions, particularly the section of Prov 8–9. This partial continuity of the rhetoric cannot piece every part of the text together, making the text sporadic and pointless.

understanding of the combination of the Hebrew poetry and discourse such as Prov 1–9.[26]

None of these scholars manage to show both the unity and continuity in these chapters.

Rhetorical Structure Based on the Ten Fatherly Discourses

In this section this study will examine how the father's rhetoric leads us to a new understanding of the unified structure of Proverbs 1–9. The investigation begins by assuming that the entire text is designed as a whole, and every part of the text functions differently to support balance and symmetry in the whole structure. Observing the features of the Hebrew poetry in the Old Testament, David N. Freedman indicates that "Such balance or symmetry is a principal characteristic of early Hebrew poetic structure, deriving apparently from its musical framework (i.e., rhythmic dancing and singing, along with simple or complex choral antiphony)."[27]

The reading of this study makes use of Steinmann's theory concerning the ten fatherly discourses in order to interpret the structure of Prov 1–9. These fatherly discourses can be identified by the rhetorical marker: בְּנִי (my son, the *singular* vocative with first–person suffix).[28] Here is the rhetorical structure of Proverbs 1–9 based on the

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[26] The analysis of the Hebrew discourse–poetry (Prov 1–9), according to Wendland, "should be progressive, systematic, and comprehensive." Wendland, "The Discourse Analysis of Hebrew Poetry," 1. Obviously these three scholars (Skehan, Fox and Waltke) have taken care of "systematic" and "comprehensive" jobs more or less; that is, the unity of the text is achieved to some extent according to their efforts. But they don't manage the "progressive" perspective as these discourses (Prov 1–9) are supposed to be treated in nature.

[27] David N. Freedman, *Divine Commitment and Human Obligation: Selected Writings of David Noel Freedman* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1997), 5 (parenthesis Freedman's).

[28] See the theory of the ten fatherly discourses in Steinman, *Proverbs*, 62–183. This rhetorical/textual marker בְּנִי is found on the first or second word of each fatherly discourse. See 1:8; 2:1; 3:1; 4:10, 20; 5:1; 6:1, 20; 7:1. Recognizing the unique feature of the ten fatherly discourses, Steinmann indicates: "One of the most striking features of the extended discourses on wisdom in the first nine chapters of Proverbs is the repeated call for a son to pay attention to his father's instruction. There are ten such sections along with one section that is an address to sons and three poems about Wisdom. This organization was part of the author's scheme to instruct his son on the wisdom of living by the guidance of God's law." Ibid., 70. This marker that occurs at the head of the ten fatherly discourses intends to create a rhetorical sequence of reading. This vocative pattern does "remind readers of structural boundaries that are essential to understand this literature

ten fatherly discourses.

Table 4. Rhetorical Structure in Prov 1–9

		Prologue	Prov 1:1–7
	first	Fatherly Discourse to a Son	Prov 1:8–19
		Wisdom Introduced: Fatherly Connecting Interlude	Prov 1:20–33
First Half	second	Fatherly Discourse to a Son	Prov 2:1–22
	third	Fatherly Discourse to a Son with A Further Description of Wisdom	Prov 3:1–20
	fourth	Fatherly Discourse to a Son with	Prov 3:21–35
		Intergenerational Wisdom Instruction to Sons: Fatherly Retrospective Interlude	Prov 4:1–9
	fifth	Fatherly Discourse to a Son	Prov 4:10–19
	sixth	Fatherly Discourse to a Son	Prov 4:20–27
	seventh	Fatherly Discourse to a Son	Prov 5:1–23
	eighth	Fatherly Discourse to a Son	Prov 6:1–19
	ninth	Fatherly Discourse to a Son	Prov 6:20–35
Second Half	tenth	Fatherly Discourse to a Son	Prov 7:1–27
		Wisdom's Ultimate Instruction: Climax of the Father's Instruction	Prov 8:1–36
		Lady Wisdom vs. Dame Folly: Conclusion of the Father's Instruction	Prov 9:1–18

It is evident that the ten fatherly discourses to a son form the skeleton of the rhetorical structure in Prov1–9. As befits his rhetorical sequence, the speaker has no intention of interrupting his instruction in the middle (4:1–9; 6:1–19) or at the end (8:1–

(Prov 1–9)." Horne, *Proverbs–Ecclesiastes*, 31(parenthesis mine). Although not so convinced by Whybray's categorization, Murphy still indicates: "The term 'son' is probably stylized here to indicate the recipient of the instructions in all the following chapters. 'My son' occurs many times in the first nine chapters: 1:8, 10, 15; 2:1; 3:1, 11, 21; 4:10, 20; 6:1, 3, 20; 7:1. As indicated above, this characteristic is used as a basis for discovering ten instructions." Murphy, *Proverbs*, 9.

9:18) of the whole series; on the contrary, he reinforces and advances his rhetoric through rhetorical devices (e.g. mnemonic monologue [4:1–9] and personified Wisdom [8:1–9:12]). Therefore, for the sake of clear rhetorical analysis, it is necessary to divide the entire structure of Prov 1–9 into two halves in order to observe how the father's rhetoric develops. The first half of our text (1:8–4:19) deals with the first five fatherly discourses together with two supporting interludes (1:20–33; 4:1–9). The second half of the text (4:20–9:18) contains the last five fatherly discourses as well as the climax and conclusion of all fatherly teaching in chapters 8–9.

First Half: Wisdom–Centered Structure That Prepares for the Climax

This first half of Prov 1–9 is constituted by the first five fatherly discourses (Prov 1:8–19; 2:1–22; 3:1–20, 21–35; 4:10–19), and serves to manifest the place of wisdom and prepare the coming climax in Prov 8–9. Here is its concentric structure:

Table 5. Concentric Structure in Prov 1:8–4:9

First Fatherly Discourse (1:8–19): Rhetorical Marker שְׁמַע בְּנִי (echo)
    Wisdom Introduced: Fatherly Connecting Interlude (1:20–33)
        Second Fatherly Discourse (2:1–22)
            Third Fatherly Discourse with a Further Description of
            Wisdom (3:1–20) (center)
        Fourth Fatherly Discourse (3:21–35)
    Intergenerational Wisdom Instruction to Sons: Fatherly Retrospective
    Interlude (4:1–9)
Fifth Fatherly Discourse (4:10–19): Rhetorical Maker שְׁמַע בְּנִי (echo)

The concentric structure centers on the third fatherly discourse (3:1–20) which reveals its emphasis on the further description of wisdom (3:13–20), and is sandwiched by the two folds of *inclusio*. The initial markers (words) שְׁמַע בְּנִי ("listen, my son") which stand at both heads of the first and fifth fatherly discourses (1:8a and 4:10a) forms an echo effect and creates the first *inclusio* as the following list shows:

Table 6. Initial Word(s) in the First Half

Fatherly Discourse	Initial Word(s)
1ˢᵗ Fatherly Discourse (1:8–19)	שְׁמַע בְּנִי
2ⁿᵈ Fatherly Discourse (2:1–22)	בְּנִי
3ʳᵈ Fatherly Discourse (3:1–20)	בְּנִי
4ᵗʰ Fatherly Discourse (3:21–35)	בְּנִי
5ᵗʰ Fatherly Discourse (4:1–9)	שְׁמַע בְּנִי

Besides the initial markers שְׁמַע בְּנִי, this *inclusio* is also bolstered by the two

similar instructions on "avoidance of evil company" in both the first and fifth fatherly

discourses.[29] Symmetry is reinforced by the common concern at the both ends of the first

half. The *inclusio* sets the boundary for the rhetorical unit (the first half) and, step by

step, reveals the central place in the third fatherly discourse, which provides *a further

description of wisdom* (see Table 5).[30]

The second *inclusio* is made by the two echoing interludes (1:20–33 and 4:1–9),

balancing the structure by providing a different aspect of the reading. The first interlude

(1:20–33) introduces personified Wisdom which appears right after the first fatherly

discourse (1:8–19), reminding the listener of the parallel places of חָכְמָה ("wisdom") and

מוּסָר ("instruction") at the very beginning of the prologue (1:2a). The *combination* of

חָכְמָה and מוּסָר (1:2a) has predicted the complicated/mixed structure of wisdom

materials and fatherly instructions. The father intentionally leaves a clue in the prologue

for the listener/reader so that, unsurprised, the listener/reader easily meets fatherly

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[29] According to Whybray's categorization, the first fatherly discourse (1:8–19) is the instruction on "avoidance of evil company" and Whybray's sixth fatherly instruction, which I consider to be the fifth fatherly discourse to a son (4:10–19), also addresses the same topic (avoidance of evil company). Whybray, *Proverbs*, 19–20; also see his *The Composition of the Book of Proverbs*, 11–61.

[30] See Table 5 in 73.

discourse (instruction) and then wisdom's poem (wisdom) in sequence. Besides, the

father adds the other synonym "the speeches of understanding" (אִמְרֵי בִינָה) at Prov 1:2b

to supplement the previous two (wisdom and instruction). "Speeches" or "words"

indicate that the style of the following text is "discourse;" however, the father doesn't

intend to differentiate these three parallelized synonyms (wisdom, instruction, and

speeches of understanding) in meaning so that the listener/reader may know these

synonyms come from the same source (the father).

The second interlude (Prov 4:1–9) starts with the plural vocative (שִׁמְעוּ בָנִים

["listen, *sons*"]) and shows that wisdom instruction is passed on generation by generation

(that is, in an intergenerational way). This interlude demonstrates the value of family

tradition as both the older generation (grandfather) and the listener's own generation

(brothers of the listener) are involved with the teaching–and–learning process.[31] A

description of personified Wisdom appears in the third person (Prov 4:5–9)[32] in this

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[31] In ancient Israel, the teaching–and–learning process is passed on through generations (e.g. Deut 6:7; 31:12–13). This interlude allows the speaking father to recall the teaching that was passed to him by his father (the listener's grandfather), and manifests the value of wisdom through the mouth of this grandfather (4:4–9). It is clearly different from the previous call (my son) in number and in the intention with which the speaker calls "שִׁמְעוּ בָנִים מוּסַר אָב" ("listen, sons, to the instruction of a father"). First of all, אָב ("a father") is an absolute noun without a pronominal suffix (cf. אָבִיךָ [your father] in Prov 1:8a), which perhaps emphasizes fatherhood rather than possessive status (your). Second, בָנִים ("sons") refers to more than one brother of the listener (a son to this father) so the speaker intends to draw broader attention among his sons, who are the listener's brothers. Third, in the perspective of the listener, horizontal (brother to brother) and vertical (father to son) relationships are entirely covered in this interlude to demonstrate the inclusive value of wisdom in the family (4:5–9)

[32] The father's rhetoric employs a double–person perspective to create this interlude. In the first level, he recalls his father's instruction and uses his own father's utterance to give his teaching. In the second level, wisdom is personified in the *third person* as someone who will "keep," "guard," "exalt," "give [an ointment of grace to]," and "bestow [a crown of glory on]" the listener (4:5–9). This personified Wisdom is described by the grandfather's lips, not directly by the listener's father. In an intensified manner, This double–person perspective may directly carry on a fatherly authority in family tradition (grandfather→ father→son), and indirectly persuade the listener through the figure of personified Wisdom. As Fox indicates about this authority, "the authority of the father is *not* radically different from the religious authority represented by *musar* YHWH. Parental authority is a channel for communication of God's will. The two sources of authority reinforce each other, and in places where only one is mentioned, the other is not thereby excluded. The father's wisdom is clearly identified with God–given wisdom in 2:1–6." Fox,

interlude so that the authority of the fatherly teaching is intensified, forming a

symmetrical balance with the first–person Wisdom in Prov 1:20–33.[33] Therefore this

retrospective fatherly interlude (4:1–9) and the fatherly connecting interlude (1:20–33)

together constitute the second *inclusio*. (See Table 5)[34]

The position of the *center* in the third fatherly discourse is intensified through the

emphatic description of wisdom. This is clear because both the fatherly instruction (3:1–

12) and the wisdom–oriented material (3:13–20) are given by one voice (the father's

voice), together manifesting the significance/value of wisdom. The fatherly instruction

(3:1–12) intensifies the significance of wisdom by using six pairs of command and

promise.[35] The first half comes to a *climax* when wisdom is personified and its value is

exalted in Prov 3:13–20.[36] This rhetorical arrangement of four couplets confirms the

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Proverbs 1–9, 178 (italics Fox's).

[33] The role of wisdom demonstrates some similarity/commonality in these two interludes (1:20–33 and 4:1–9): (1) wisdom's personification; (2) both the vocative listeners are plural (see פְּתָיִם [simple ones] in 1:22a and בָּנִים [sons] in 4:1a; cf. 8:32a); (3) both appeal to the authority of wisdom (see the authority of rebuke in 1:23–33 and the authority of promise in 4:5–9); (4) personified wisdom is introduced by the father (see personified wisdom introduced as the *third* person in 1:20–21 and 4:5–9). These similarity/ commonality helps to form a symmetrical balance in these two interludes.

[34] See Table 5 in 73.

[35] In the third fatherly discourse, first come the six commands, which are: "Do not forget my teachings" (v. 1); "Do not let go of mercy and truth" (v. 3); "Trust Yahweh" (v. 5); "Do not consider yourself wise" (v. 7); "Honor Yahweh" (v. 9); and "Do not despise Yahweh's discipline" (v. 11). Each of these commands is followed by a promise; the promises are: "Long, whole life" (v. 2); "Favor before God and people" (v. 4); "Straight paths" (v. 6); "Health" (v. 8); "Prosperity" (v. 10); and "Yahweh loves you as a father" (v. 12). See the six pairs in Bruce K. Waltke, "Does Proverbs Promise Too Much?" *AUSS* 34 (1996): 320–21, and the relevant discussion in Steinmann, *Proverbs*, 104–7.

[36] This rhetorical purpose of this section is "to assert that wisdom is of inestimable value and worth, far more than of any human treasure; to present wisdom as the alternative to the allure of fertility goddesses and their foreign cultures; and to note that the wisdom that dispenses life and its various blessings (life, riches, and honor) to its followers is the same wisdom used by God in the creation and providential care of the world. The identical knowledge and power that reside in God's activity of creation and world maintenance are available to those who find wisdom." Perdue, *Proverbs*, 104. If Perdue is accepted, the passage that emphasizes wisdom produces a *climax* for the first half in Prov 1–9 (1:8–4:19), demonstrating the importance/value of wisdom. Because the same message will occur again in Prov 8–9, this climax is made to prepare the listener/reader for the magnificent coming of personified Wisdom in the higher climax in Prov 8.

emphasis on wisdom as well as the central place of the entire half (1:8–4:19).[37] The

creational description of wisdom (3:13–20, in particular 3:19–20) that echoes wisdom's

self–praising culmination in Prov 8:1–36 (in particular 8:22–31) elevates the vision of the

listener/reader to a higher/divine level. In the other words, the importance and value of

wisdom depends on its relationship with the Creator, its Ultimate Giver, but not on the

creature its user.

The intention of a holistic perspective becomes apparent in the central placement of

the third fatherly discourse (3:1–20), if this discourse is properly associated with its

surrounding discourses. In the second fatherly discourse (2:1–22), the father reminds his

son to seek wisdom[38] and then the father turns the son's attention onto Yahwistic piety in

the third fatherly discourse (3:1–20).[39] With the piety of Yahweh, this listener is then

ready to be led into the treasure house of wisdom for a glance at its wonders (3:13–20).[40]

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[37] According to Perdue, "Proverbs 3:13–20 is a wisdom poem of four couplets or strophes (each of two poetic lines) that centers on the metaphor of Woman Wisdom: the first strophe (vv.13–14) speaks of the joy of the discovery of wisdom and its value; the second (vv.15–16) describes wisdom's incomparable precious nature and its representation as a goddess of life; the third (vv.17–18) continues the depiction of wisdom as a goddess of life; and the last (vv.19–20) describes her role in creation (cf. the poems in Prov 8:1–11, 12–21; and also Psalm 19)." Ibid., 101. (parenthesis Perdue's) If Perdue's observation is correct, the section of Prov 3:13–20 manifests the role of wisdom with emphasis and confirms the central place of the first half (1:8–4:19) in Prov 1–9. It is because the original author or editor intends to emphasize the importance/value of wisdom so that the listener/reader won't be surprised at the climax (Prov 8) and conclusion (Prov 9) of wisdom teaching.

[38] Wisdom is valuable for the listener to seek (2:4), but wisdom can be pursued only when the seeker keeps his fear/piety of Yahweh (2:6–8) and keeps himself from all evil (2:9–22). The father's rhetoric has placed a hint of Yahwistic piety in the second fatherly discourse and so the reading moves logically to the next discourse.

[39] The first part (3:1–12) of the third fatherly discourse focuses on Yahwistic piety. The terms חֶסֶד (mercy/love) and אֱמֶת (faithfulness) in 3:3 rhetorically lead to the everlasting relationship that Yahweh has given to His people. The listener is encouraged to trust in Yahweh with all his heart (3:5), to acknowledge (3:6), to fear (3:7), and to honor (3:9) Yahweh as He deserves. Otherwise, Yahweh will reprove him whom He loves as "a father" does "the son in whom he delights" (3:12). This ethos that the speaker has in this discourse is a continuation from the second fatherly discourse.

[40] When the reading moves on in the father's ethos, the listener/reader is led to cherish everything that men consider to be valuable (silver, gold, jewels) in a treasure house, but the value of wisdom is greater than those (3:14–15) Moreover, "Long life is in her (wisdom's) right hand; in her left hand are riches and honor. Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace. She is a tree of life to those who lay

After this temporary peak concerning wisdom, it is possible that the listening son might merely stay to admire the splendor of wisdom without taking further action, so in the fourth fatherly discourse (3:21–35) the father encourages his young listener to actualize the life of wisdom in charity and uprightness.[41] In fact, the place of the fourth fatherly discourse (3:21–35) becomes significant in creating the temporary peak (3:13–20); and in a similar way, the final wisdom poem (9:1–18) functions like the fourth fatherly discourse to the ultimate wisdom instruction (the climax) in chapter 8.[42]

In summary, the concentric structure of the first half (1:8–4:19) is wisdom–centered (see Table 5).[43] In order to create a unified reading, the role of wisdom is intentionally highlighted in the double–*inclusio* structure which is built by the two echoing discourses (Prov 1:8–19 and 3:21–35) and the two interludes (Prov 1:20–33 and 4:1–9). As the reading proceeds, the double *inclusio* creates a sense of intensification and impresses the

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hold of her; those who hold her fast are called happy" (3:16–18). The demonstration reaches its culmination when the speaking father introduces the creational origin of wisdom to his listening son (3:19–20). Doubtlessly this ultimate rhetoric impels the listener into Yahwistic fear/piety so that wisdom becomes extremely attractive to the listener.

[41] Leo G. Perdue categorizes the section of Prov 3:21–35 as the fourth fatherly instruction, on the topic: "the life of wisdom is actualized in charity and uprightness." Perdue, *Proverbs*, 105–111. According to Perdue, "This teaching (the fourth fatherly discourse) has the purpose of exhorting students to inculcate the virtues of 'sound wisdom' and 'discretion' (or 'prudence') so that they may enjoy comfort and security in their life journey by making wise and successful decisions and by receiving the protective oversight of God. In addition, these virtues enable them, along with their own households, to act justly and to live in harmony with their neighbors." (110) That is, the life of wisdom is established on the firm foundation of the first tablet of the Ten Commandments (God–to–man relationship), but the actualization of wisdom must depend on the second tablet (man–to–man relationship). Charity and uprightness are the two major characteristics of "loving your neighbors as yourself." Here the father's ethos intends to turn the attention of wisdom from heaven (3:19–20) back to earthly/real life. The purpose of acquiring wisdom is to actualize it in a real life, that is, to develop personal "uprightness" on the one hand and to commit "charity" to others on the other hand.

[42] This study considers that the ultimate wisdom instruction in chapter 8 is initiated by the father (8:1–3) and is the culmination of the father's instruction in the entire block of Prov 1–9. The message of chapter 9 summarizes all the message of Prov 1–8 has to say and asks for an action of choice. In order to impress the reader/listener, the father's rhetoric prepares in advance this similar mode between the temporary peak concerning wisdom (3:13–20) and the actualization of wisdom's life in the fourth fatherly discourse. This actualization also asks for an action of choice/decision to do the right thing (helping a neighbor or avoiding evil) in real life.

[43] See 73.

listener/reader through *symmetrical balance*. This rhetorical design is appropriately used to lead into the coming discourses (4:20–9:18) which emphasize anti–wisdom (evil–focused) concerns, and to *prepare* for the climax of wisdom instruction in Prov 8 and the final contrast of the two personified figures (Lady Wisdom and Dame Folly) in chapter 9.

Second Half: An Evil–Focused Structure that Manifests the Climax

This section demonstrates how the evil–focused (anti–wisdom) structure is formed and how the climax of the negative side is manifested in the second half of Prov 1–9 (4:20–9:18). Stair by stair, the description of evil is intentionally intensified in the structure so that a contrast is formed with the previous wisdom–centered section; this also causes the following climax of wisdom instruction in Prov 8 to become more impressive in the rhetorical design. Indeed the evil adulteress (the strange woman) has appeared as early as in the second fatherly discourse (2:16–19), but she is not the chief or only threat to the listener yet, nor is she a major concern in that context.[44] Not until the second half of Prov 1–9 is she revealed as a serious problem, her menace gradually becoming powerful and deadly. This adulteress represents the epitome of all evils,[45] and becomes personified

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[44] The role of the evil adulteress or strange woman (אִשָּׁה זָרָה) is used as part of the pair of the two tempters in 2:12–19 (the other part is the evil man). There are some parallel descriptions between these two tempters: the perverse words (v.12) // the seductive words (v.16); abandoning the straight path (v.13) // abandoning the husband and the promises (v.17); going in dark, crooked, and devious paths (vv. 13, 15) // leading to paths to the gateway of death (vv. 18–19); result of the victims (v. 14) // result of the victim (vv. 18–19). Garrett indicates: "Two tempters face the young man as he enters adulthood and must make decisions about the course of life he will follow. The first is the evil man, the criminal, who holds out the promise of easy money (vv. 12–15; cf. 1:10–19), and the second is the evil woman, the prostitute, who holds out the promise of easy sex (vv. 16–19; cf. 5:1–23)." Garrett, *Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs*, 76. If Garrett is correct, the role of the adulteress (strange woman) is used as part of threat, not a chief one and she has not become a major threat to the listener yet in the this fatherly discourse (2:1–22). In addition, the major concern of this fatherly discourse is upon the value and blessings of wisdom (2:2–11) so that the listener can be *encouraged* to make a right choice (2:20–22). In brief, the threat of the evil adulteress is not the major concern in the second fatherly discourse (2:1–22) as well as in the first half of Prov 1–9 (1:8–4:19).

[45] This idea is inspired by Camp when she introduces this adulteress "is an archetype of disorder at all

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in Prov 9 (9:13–18) as Dame Folly, the contrast to Lady Wisdom (9:1–6).[46] Here is the

stair–like structure:

Table 7. Stair–Like Structure in Prov 4:20–7:27

Level Three
Tenth Fatherly Discourse: Third–Level Evil Concerning the Adulteress (7:1–27)
Level Two
Ninth Fatherly Discourse: Second–Level Evil Concerning the Adulteress (6:20–35)
Eighth Fatherly Discourse: Awareness of Evils (6:1–19)
Level One
Seventh Fatherly Discourse: First–Level Evil Concerning the Adulteress (5:1–23)
Sixth Fatherly Discourse: Keeping Alert (4:20–27)

This stair–like structure presents the two double–pairs of fatherly discourses (the

first pair being the sixth–seventh fatherly discourses and the second pair being the

eighth–ninth fatherly discourses) before it ends with the 10th fatherly discourse. The

structure of described evil produced by the adulteress develops from the first level (found

the seventh fatherly discourse, Prov 5:1–23), through the second level (the ninth fatherly

discourse, Prov 6:20–35), and continues to the third level (the 10th fatherly discourse,

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levels of existence." Camp, *Wisdom and the Feminine in the Book of Proverbs*, 119. For a further explanation, Camp indicates: "I should stress, however, that it is the poetry and editing that have fashioned this archetype; it was not something that existed in some 'collective unconscious' of Israel. Nor was harlotry, as a social phenomenon, in and of itself necessarily opprobrious but probably was, as Niditch's study suggested, a tacitly accepted role for disenfranchised women. It is only when the strange woman is interpreted as an *adulteress* that she has the capacity of disruption at all levels of existence. She represents not only those desires that turn a student's mind from his studies, but also those actions that can disrupt God's order, with the consequence of cutting off the perpetrator from that order – concretely expressed as 'land' and 'assembly' – and plunging him, with her, into the chaos of Sheol." (italic Camp's) Ibid., 119–20.

[46] This role of adulteress symbolically implies all evil and historically relates to the corruption of Solomon's adultery as the Solomonic superscription conveys to its reader. (1:1) The Davidic kingdom came into crisis because of King Solomon's sin of adultery. King Solomon "loved many foreign women" (1 Kgs 11:1), and had seven hundred wives of royal birth and three concubines (1 Kgs 11:3), with whom Yahweh had forbidden Israelites to intermarry (Deut 7:3–4; Jos. 23:12; 1 Kgs 11:2). Most of the evils and sins that occurred with Solomon and the kingdom began with the breaking of Yahweh's command. Steinmann is correct when he indicates that "the contrast between Wisdom and the adulterous woman is an important way for Solomon to commend Wisdom and turn his son from foolishness." Steinmann, *Proverbs*, 125. In other words, this is the strategy that the father utilizes to develop his rhetorical structure.

Prov 7:1–27), the level of the ultimate evil. This creates the rhetorical effect of

crescendo, forming the stair–like structure of intensification. R. Alter explains the

structure of intensification in the Hebrew poetry and indicates:

> There are, that is, many biblical poems in which any implied events, even
> metaphoric ones, are secondary while what is primary is a predicament, an
> image, or a thematic idea that is *amplified* from verset to verset and from line
> to line. Poetic form acts in these cases as a kind of magnifying glass,
> concentrating the rays of meaning to a white–hot point. This means, to
> translate that static image back into the sequential mode in which the literary
> text works, that the progression of intensifying thematic particles is brought
> to a culminating flare–up, or compels resolution by a sharp reversal at the
> end.[47]

The three levels that focus on the figure of the adulteress show similarity and

continuity in three categories: (1) the adulteress' identity, (2) the adulteress' skills and (3)

the consequences to her victim. For instance, this adulteress is initially described as a

strange woman (זָרָה) and a foreign woman (נָכְרִיָּה) in the seventh fatherly discourse

(5:10, 20). She is given the same or similar names in the ninth and tenth fatherly

discourse (e.g., 6:24; 7:5 and etc.). The repetition concerning her identity is intended to

create a rhetorical *crescendo* as the description of the evil adulteress increases in strength

from level to level. By including the three categories concerning the evil adulteress on

every level, the rhetorical design shows an overall order and at last manifests the climax

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[47] Alter, *The Art of Biblical Poetry*, 63. Alter dedicates a whole section to study the structure of intensification in Hebrew poetry. In thee poetic discourses, intensification can be achieved by antithesis, alliteration, polysemy, paranomastic assonance, variation of temporal sequence, and the insertion of surprise terms. See Alter's discussion in ibid., 62–84. Andrew Bartel studies the issue of dialectical negation in Hebrew poetry and points out, "If this binary opposition of Hebrew poetry (Kugel's "A, and what's more B") is seen as the juxtaposition of two statements that are much more complementary than contradictory, it is likely that this idiom of dialectical negation is deeply rooted in the *thought patterns* underlying biblical expression. Indeed, it is a point worth pondering to ask whether this is a helpful way to deal with the various tensions that arise within a biblical theology." Andrew H. Bartelt, "Dialectical Negation: An Exegetical Both/And" in *Hear the Word of Yahweh: Essays on Scripture and Archaeology in Honor of Horace D. Hummel* (ed. Dean O. Wenthe, Paul L. Schrieber, and Lee A. Maxwell; St. Louis, Miss.: Concordia, 2002), 64. The three discourses that *intensify* the force of the evil follow the thought patterns (adulteress' identity, adulteress' skill, and consequences to the victim) of dialectical negation to network the second half (4:20–7:27) of anti–wisdom.

of wisdom teaching in Prov 8.

Level One: First–Level Evil of the Adulteress

Level One is composed of the sixth and seventh fatherly discourses (4:20–27; 5:1–23), and describes the first–level evil of the adulteress. To encourage the listener/reader to treat the sixth and seventh fatherly discourses together as a rhetorical pair, both begin with the same rhetorical formula, as follows:

בְּנִי לִדְבָרַי הַקְשִׁיבָה לַאֲמָרַי הַט־אָזְנֶךָ׃
(4:20, "*My son, give attention to* my words; *incline your ear to* my sayings/speeches.")

בְּנִי לְחָכְמָתִי הַקְשִׁיבָה לִתְבוּנָתִי הַט־אָזְנֶךָ׃
(5:1, "*My son, give attention to* my wisdom; *incline your ear to* my understanding.")

These two verses are rhetorically connected, and make the sixth and seventh fatherly discourses (4:20–27; 5:1–23) read together. The equivalence of parallelism that apparently exists in the formulae tightens the connection.[48]

In the first section of this level, the father reminds the listener to *keep alert*. In an intensifying way, the father's rhetoric uses eight imperatives plus five jussives in this discourse to achieve the effect of persuasion.[49] These volitional verbs structure the entire

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[48] For instance, the equivalence of parallelism are shown as: לְ + plural construct // לְ + plural construct (4:20a; 5:1a) and הַקְשִׁיבָה ("give attention," 4:20b) // הַט־אָזְנֶךָ ("incline your ear," 5:1b). The father's rhetoric utilizes the masculine plural pair (דְבָרַי ["my words"]and אֲמָרַי ["my utterances"]) in the sixth fatherly discourse parallel the other feminine plural pair (חָכְמָתִי ["my wisdom"] and תְבוּנָתִי ["my understanding"]) in the seventh fatherly discourse. The feminine plurals are intentionally/ rhetorically prepared for their contrast, "the strange woman" (feminine).

[49] The eight imperatives include הַקְשִׁיבָה ("give attention") and הַט ("incline [ear]") in v. 20, שָׁמְרֵם ("keep [them]") in v. 21, נְצֹר ("guard") in v. 23, הָסֵר ("turn aside") and הַרְחֵק ("remove") in v. 24, פַּלֵּס ("smoothen") in v. 26, and הָסֵר ("turn aside") in v. 27. The five jussives or at least the imperfect verbs with jussive meaning are אַל־יַלִּיזוּ ("don't depart") in v. 21, יַבִּיטוּ ("regard") and יְיַשִּׁרוּ ("make straight") in v. 25, יִכֹּנוּ ("be established") in v. 26, and אַל־תֵּט ("don't turn") in v. 27. All of these verbs network the force of persuasion in reminding the listener to keep alert. Before the strange woman, the incarnation of evils, appears on the stage (the seventh fatherly discourse), vigilance is necessary. The sentence "Guard your heart with all vigilance/watch (מִכָּל־מִשְׁמָר)" in v. 23 appropriately indicates the father's intention to remind

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sixth fatherly discourse as well as Level One to denote an *imminent* and *serious* threat of evil. Indeed, this fatherly discourse doesn't mention what kind of threat or evil the listener is about to face, but the warnings concerning crooked speech (4:24) and wayward distraction (4:25–27) predict the coming of the evil adulteress (the strange woman) (cf. 5:3–4 and 5–6). Above all, this discourse serves as a prelude for the content in the seventh fatherly discourse.

The second section of Level One (which is the seventh fatherly discourse) *officially* introduces the evil adulteress in the exordium of the discourse (5:1–6). The father's rhetoric skillfully employs the logic of cause–consequence to encircle the paragraph (5:1–6) and delineate the role of the adulteress.[50] The evil that is mentioned but uncertain in the sixth fatherly discourse now is personified as a strange woman and comes upon the stage as a dreadful threat to the listener's life. Truly this adulteress is the miniature of all evil. The father's rhetoric uses different descriptions to show the identities of this adulteress (e.g., 5:3, 10 and 20) so that the listener becomes aware of the physical, social and psychological harm involved with those identities—for example, what the revenge of a stranger will be if the listener commits adultery with his wife (the stranger's wife, see 5:10 and 20). Here is how the adulteress is described:

Table 8. List of the First Level Evil of the Adulteress (Prov 5:1–23)

Adulteress's Identities	A strange woman (5:3), a stranger's wife (5:10, 20), a foreign woman (5:20)

the listener of the harm from the evil adulteress.

[50] The father's rhetoric employs the particle preposition כִּי to construct the following expression (5:3–6). The logic that the father's rhetoric employs presents the passage of 5:1–6 as an integral cause–consequence section. The seduction of the adulteress is the cause (5:3–6), and the listening son's obedience to the speaking father is the encouraged consequence (5:1–2). Ignoring the causal clauses led by the particle כִּי and the new paragraph beginning with וְעַתָּה ("and now") plus a vocative and imperative (בָנִים שִׁמְעוּ) in 5:7, Fox makes a mistake by treating the exordium of the eighth fatherly lecture (the seventh fatherly discourse, 5:1–23) limited only in 5:1–2. See Fox, *Proverbs 1–9*, 190–1.

Adulteress's Skills	Speech (5:3), embracing bosom (5:20)
Consequences to Her Victim	Bitterness, danger (5:4), threat of life or death (5:5–6, 14; cf. 5:23), being under the control of strangers (5:9–10), psychological and physical harm (5:11–14); disloyalty of marriage (5:15–20)

On this first level, the adulteress is recognized as a strange woman, (זָרָה) (5:3), namely as a stranger's wife (5:10, 20) or a foreign woman (נָכְרִיָּה) (5:20) but no further identity is given. The enticing skills that the adulteress uses are as simple as words (lips and speech) and one part of her body (bosom). If the listener is not willing to accept the speaker's warning, he will surely become her victim and taste the consequences: her bitterness (like wormwood) and danger (like a two–edged sword) (5:4). In detail, these descriptions denote a threat to life (5:5–6), being under the control of strangers (5:9–10), psychological and physical harm (groaning and body consumed) (5:11) and disloyalty of marriage (5:15–20). On this level, the victim's consequences are still described as simply the *taste* of bitterness and danger.

In summary, this level introduces the adulteress as a personification of evil but everything about this figure still remains in the beginning stage, that of tasting. The power of evil has not been so serious in the level, but it will be intensified in the following levels.

Level Two: Second–Level Evil of the Adulteress

The second level of evil is presented in the paired eighth and ninth fatherly discourses (6:1–19; 6:20–35). This level begins as the eighth fatherly discourse presents four strophes of the different kinds of evils, which prepares the listener for the further, more intense description of the adulteress in the ninth fatherly discourse.

Thus the eighth fatherly discourse (6:1–19) plays the role of *bridge* to the ninth fatherly discourse (6:20–35) as the sixth fatherly discourse (4:20–27) does to the seventh fatherly discourse (5:1–23). Although redactional scholars consider this section a discontinuity and in fact a later insertion,[51] the thematic connection of this section strongly supports its place among the fatherly discourses (Prov 1–7).[52]

The eighth fatherly discourse contains four strophes indicating the different kinds of evils about which the listener should be warned.[53] They are as follows:

> Strophe One: Ignorance on Surety (6:1–5);
> Strophe Two: Sluggishness (6:6–11);
> Strophe Three: Troublemaking (6:12–15);
> Strophe Four: Seven Evils to the Lord (6:16–19).

Instead of targeting any one evil behavior, these four strophes are listed together in order to *exemplify* various kinds of evil. This is the reason why the last strophe that appears in numerical form (seven kinds of evil) looks like an appendix or supplement. None of these strophes directly mentions the figure of the adulteress, but all of the evils indicated in them will be condensed and personified into her figure in the following discourse (6:20–35). This encourages the listener/reader to concentrate on the severity of the threat from evil.[54] The table below shows the growing intensity of the adulteress's evil.

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[51] Cf. e.g., Whybray, *Proverbs*, 93; McKane, *Proverbs*, 320; Fox, *Proverbs 1–9*, 225; also see the relevant discussion in 11–30 (Chapter Two).

[52] The supporters of this continuity include Waltke, Horne and Harris. See Waltke, *The Book of Proverbs Chapter 1–15*, 11; also cf. 325–348; Horne, *Proverbs–Ecclesiastes*, 101; Harris, *Proverbs 1–9*, 111–34.

[53] Perdue categorizes this section (6:1–19) as the eighth instruction (the eighth fatherly discourse) and indicates, "The eighth instruction contains a *miscellany* of subjects that are important to the sapiential tradition. The primary emphasis is placed on indolence, which is the topic of interest in the first two strophes (vv. 1–5 and vv. 6–11). The third strophe addresses the worthless person, a wicked man whose behavior is described and dreadful fate is predicted (vv. 12–15). The fourth strophe in verses 16–19 contains a numerical saying that identifies seven things that are an abomination to Yahweh."(italics mine) Perdue, *Proverbs*, 123.

[54] As far as the rhetorical effect is concerned, a direct warning might be too strong to accept for the

Table 9. List of the Second Level Evil of the Adulteress (Prov 6:20–35)

Adulteress's Identities	A evil woman, a foreign woman (6:24); a harlot, a woman of (another) man (6:26); a neighbor's wife (6:29)
Adulteress's Skills	Smooth tongue (6:24); beauty, eyelashes (6:25)
Consequences to the victim	Poverty, threat of life or death (6:26); danger of life (6:27); punishment (6:29); no sense, destruction (6:32); wounds, dishonor, disgrace (6:33); jealous revenge (6:34–35)

It is clear that on this level the father uses his rhetoric to show the adulteress as a more dangerous threat to the son's life. Compared to the first level, the adulteress's skills are enhanced by including more than one part of her body (tongue, beauty/appearance, and eyelashes). Her identity is clearly more dangerous: this adulteress who is evil and foreign (6:24) in nature is not only another man's wife (6:26) but "a neighbor's wife" (6:29) and "a harlot" (6:26). In other words, the adulteress has destroyed the loyalty of marriage that a wife is supposed to keep according to the divine commandment (Exod. 20:14; Deut. 5:18; cf. Prov 5:15–20) and causes her jealous husband to seek revenge (6:34–35).

Unsurprisingly, the consequences to her victim become more severe as well. The threat to life (5:5–6) in the first level has become the danger of life (6:27), and even destruction (6:32) in this second level. On the first level, the victim could expect psychological and physical harm (groaning and a consumed body in 5:11), but at the second level these afflictions have become more intense: punishment (6:29), wounds, dishonor and disgrace (6:33). Newly added consequences include financial damage

listener. After the direct warnings against evil in the sixth and eighth fatherly discourses (4:20–27; 6:1–19), the speaker has to consider a different strategy to achieve his persuasion. The personification of the adulteress presents an skillful art of the speaker, keeping his rhetoric (the father's rhetoric) consistent in manner (cf. personified Wisdom in 1:20–33; chs. 8–9). This skill can prevent the listener/reader from getting distracted from the severity of the threat from evil.

(6:26) and damage to social relationships (6:34–35).

It is the father's rhetoric that is responsible for this strategy of intensification in order that the forces of anti–wisdom, personified as the adulteress, become more impressive until the culmination of anti–wisdom appears in chapter 7. There is no apparent difference in the nature of evil between stairs one and two (levels one and two) except in the intensity of the description.

Level Three: Third–Level Evil of the Adulteress

The tenth fatherly discourse (7:1–27) describes the third–level evil of the adulteress, who functions as the *climax* of all evils in this three–level structure and as the *contrast* to Lady Wisdom in chapter 8. The rhetorical intention is clear as these two women appear side by side. From a rhetorical perspective, the role of the adulteress in the tenth fatherly discourse is *Janus–faced*. On the one hand, her appearance here increases the threatening strength of evil to an extreme; on the other hand, she, as the representative of anti–wisdom, serves as a contrast to Lady Wisdom, who is the climax of the wisdom statement in chapter 8. As Waltke indicates, "this concluding lecture (the tenth fatherly discourse) functions as a janus, looking back to the preceding lectures against the unfaithful wife, and being paired with Woman Wisdom's great address in ch. 8. It, too, describes her geography, her character, and her speech (ch. 8)."[55]

In this discourse, the son is guided into the world of the speaker's life to see all that happens to the adulteress and her young victim through the viewpoint of the father (7:6). The listener may not know the victim in this discourse, but he can get the whole picture through the viewpoint of the father. All that the father tries to tell his son comes from his

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[55] Waltke, *The Book of Proverbs Chapters 1–15*, 367.

real experience of life as well as his *imagination*. The speaker may have observed the encounter of these two (the adulteress and her young victim) through a window, even when it was getting dark or was dark already (7:8). However, it is impossible for the speaker to have heard every word from the seductress's mouth (7:14–20) or to directly read the evil cunning of her heart (7:10b). These are the product of the speaker's imaginary judgment. Let us turn now to the third level evil of the adulteress as described by the father.

Table 10. List of the Third Level Evil of the Adulteress (Prov 7:1–27)

Adulteress's Identities	The realistic woman on the spot (7:6–10); a strange woman (7:5), a harlot (7:10); a priestess or pseudo–religious woman (7:14); a talented woman (7:16–17); a desperate woman (7:18); a man's wife (7:19 – 20); a killer (7:22, 26); a guide to Sheol (7: 27)
Adulteress's Skills	Smooth words (7:5); a wily heart (7:10); wildness (7:11); patience (7:12); insistence, kiss (7:13); seductive speech (7:14–21); religious custom (7:14); skillful lie (7:15); artful skills (7:16–17); invitation (7:18); reasonable excuse (7:19–20)
Consequences to the victim	Foolishness, simpleness (7:7); ignorance (7:8); disloyalty to wife (7:13–21, cf. 5:15–20); being slaughtered, being noosed (7:22); rushing into a snare, being pierced/killed (7:23); going astray (7:25); being slain (7:26); going to Sheol/the chambers of death (7:27)

The strength of the father's rhetoric is greatest here as he describes the adulteress' skills and identities and the consequences to her victim. On this level, the identities of the strange woman has become more religious (pseudo–religious) (7:14), more talented (7:16–17), more desperate (7:18), and more realistic (7:6–10). To the highest extent of her skill, this woman's wildness (7:11), patience (7:12), and insistence (7:13) can be clearly seen in her smooth words (7:5), wily heart (7:10), seductive speech (7:14–21),

religious custom (7:14), skillful lies (7:15) and artful talents (7:16–17). Concerning the consequences to her victim, this level is also more severe than the previous two levels. The tenth fatherly discourse not only repeats what has been said in the previous levels (in the 6th and 9th fatherly discourses) concerning ignorance (7:8; cf. 6:32), threat of life/death (7:22, 26–27; cf. 5:5–6; 6:26–27), and psychological and physical harm (7:13–25; cf. 5:9–11; 6:33–35). It also emphasizes a judgment (foolishness and simpleness in 7:7, cf. 1:4a, 7b) that is not mentioned in the previous two levels. The extreme of anti–wisdom is achieved with the two pairs of fourfold metaphorical description on death (7:22–23, 25–26).[56]

Thus this study sees that the three–level structure in the second half of Proverbs 1–9 (sixth–tenth fatherly discourses) emphasizes the side of anti–wisdom as portrayed in the figure of the adulteress, the personification of all evil. Through the three levels of evil that the father's rhetoric creates for the adulteress, the strength of anti–wisdom increases in a *crescendo* manner until the climax of evils occurs with the appearance of the adulteress in the tenth fatherly discourse (Prov 7:1–27). The use of personification *intensifies* the contrast between the wisdom–centered concern of the first half of Proverbs 1–9 (that is, the first–fifth fatherly discourses) and the climax of personified Wisdom in Prov 8–9.[57] Therefore this evil–focused structure plays a significant role in building the sequence of the entire rhetorical structure of Prov 1–7 and preparing for the coming

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[56] The first four–fold describes the adulteress' victim like an ox to be slaughtered (7:22b), a man with fetters (7:22b), a man with the liver pieced by arrow (7:23a), and a bird hastening to a snare (7:23b). The second four–fold warns the listener with the four intensified pictures (two pairs of parallel descriptions): men slain (7:26a), mighty men slain (7:26b), going to Sheol (7:27a), and going down to the chamber of death (7:27b).

[57] That is, the personified adulteress is shown between two personified Wisdom figures, one in Prov 3:13–20 (the center of the first half) and one in Prov 8–9, in order to create a Janus–faced contrast (Lady Wisdom–the evil adulteress–Lady Wisdom). The sequence emphasizes the climax through contrast.

climax in Prov 8–9.

In summary, the rhetorical structure of Prov 1–7 is based on the ten fatherly discourses to a son, which are divided into two halves with different emphases. The first five fatherly discourses (1:8–19, 2:1–22, 3:1–20, 21–35, 4:10–19) center at the third fatherly discourse (Prov 3:13–20) and are wisdom–focused. A structure of inclusio is developed in this half by the double sandwiches (double inclusio) made both by the two rhetorical/echoic markers שְׁמַע בְּנִי (my son, listen) in the first and fifth fatherly discourses (echo to echo) and by the two corresponding interludes in Prov 1:20–33 and 4:1–9 (interlude to interlude).

The second half of Proverbs 1–7 (the sixth–tenth fatherly discourses, 4:20–27, 5:1–23, 6:1–19, 20–35, 7:1–27) is focused on anti–wisdom. The father's rhetoric builds a three level structure of evil which increases in strength step by step until the climax of all evil, the personification of the adulteress in chapter 7.

The two halves with their different concerns (wisdom–oriented v.s. anti–wisdom–oriented) demonstrate the unity and continuity of the text in Prov 1–7. Yet the father's rhetoric does not stop in Prov 1–7. Just as the father addresses the listener through the mouth of the adulteress, he also speaks through the mouth of Lady Wisdom in Prov 8–9 (cf. also wisdom's speech in Prov 1:20–33). The role of the adulteress is designed as a contrast to personified Wisdom; these two personified figures are inseparable in the father's rhetoric. That is, the father's rhetoric doesn't remain confined to Prov 1–7 but continues and climaxes in Prov 8–9. Let the investigation now turn to Prov 8–9, to see how it relates to the preceding fatherly discourses.

Climax and Conclusion Achieved in Proverbs 8–9

This study proposes that Prov 8–9 is inseparable from the previous fatherly discourses in Prov 1–7, and indeed, the climax and conclusion of wisdom instruction in Prov 8–9 are achieved by the work of the father's rhetoric in Prov 1–7. In order to demonstrate this in terms of structure, we will examine Prov 8–9 in regards to its unity and continuity with the ten fatherly discourses in Prov 1–7.

Although Prov 8–9 is complicated in composition, the father's rhetoric helps to present the materials of these two chapters in an orderly manner. This is accomplished through the father's three introductions (8:1–3; 9:1–3; 13–15), the two sections of Lady Wisdom's sayings (8:4–36; 9:4–6), the single section of Dame Folly's sayings (9:16–18) and Lady Wisdom's conclusion, which is also the fatherly final comment (9:7–12).

(1) Climax in Proverbs 8: The section of Prov 8 presents the role of Lady Wisdom (personified Wisdom) and the climax of Prov 1–9. The rhetorical structure of Prov 8 is as follows:

Table 11. Rhetorical Structure in Prov 8:1–36

Wisdom's Ultimate Instruction: Climax of the Father's Instruction	Prov 8:1–36
Father's Introduction	Prov 8:1–3
Lady Wisdom's Summary	Prov 8:4–21
Lady Wisdom's Self–praise	Prov 8:22–31
Lady Wisdom's Shema	Prov 8:32–36

According to this structure, the entire block of Prov 1–9 reaches a climax in chapter 8 when it uses Lady Wisdom to present wisdom's ultimate instruction. In the development of the wisdom poem in this chapter, Lady Wisdom is introduced as a third person by *the father* (8:1–3), the same speaker of Prov 1–7; then she gives her first–

person speech through the end of the chapter (8:4–36). The effect of climax is achieved

when the speaker utilizes Lady Wisdom to summarize the wisdom teachings of Prov 1–7

(8:4–21) and to highlight the value of wisdom by her self–praise (8:22–31). The final

shema passage (8:32–36) is an echo of the previous *shema* in the fatherly discourses (e.g.,

1:8; 4:1, 10) making firm the continuity with Prov 1–7.[58]

The block of Prov 8 cannot properly reveal its value of the emphasis on wisdom

without the previous fatherly discourses; and Prov 1–7 as a whole becomes pointless and

scattered (as shown in Tables 4 and 5)[59] if there is no climax in Prov 8. The two blocks of

text depend on each other. This is clear for other reasons as well.

First, the change of aspect supports the place of climax in Prov 8. Since the father

as the chief speaker effaces himself after he finishes his last discourse at the end of Prov

1–7, Lady Wisdom appears as the speaker in the following sections. The aspect of the

structure changes along with the switch of speaker's voice so that a climax can be made.

Longacre explains the function of a climax or "peak" in this way:

> Peak essentially is a zone of turbulence in regard to the flow of the discourse
> in its preceding and following parts. Routine features of the storyline may be
> distorted or phased out at peak. Thus, the characteristic storyline tense/aspect
> may be substituted for by another tense/aspect. Alternatively, the

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[58] In the beginning (8:32a) of the concluding passage (8:32–36), Lady Wisdom cries out: "שִׁמְעוּ־לִי
וְעַתָּה בָנִים" ("Now therefore, listen to me, sons".) The *shema* (imperative) with the vocative בָנִים is very
close to rhetorical markers used in previous fatherly discourses. According to Murphy, "The vigorous
opening phrase calls attention to a new development, an address to 'children' by way of a conclusion to the
speech. Wisdom has ranged far and wide in her description of her prerogatives and her preexistence, and
she has just underscored her 'delight' with human beings. Now, *like the teacher in the earlier chapters*, she
returns to her audience of v 4. She concludes, exhorting them to 'listen' (twice, vv. 32–33), and she gives
advice in the form of imperatives and blessings. The tone is quite positive; only at the end (v. 36) is penalty
indicated for rejecting her, and then somewhat reluctantly, since it is set off neatly against the great promise
of v 35." Murphy, *Proverbs*, 53 (italics mine). Discussing the form of this *shema* speech, Waltke also
indicates: "The logical particle 'so now' (v. 32) and *the form of the father introductions to his lectures*,
consisting of addresses ('the sons'), imperatives to 'listen'(vv. 32–34), and argumentation or motivation
introduced by *kî* ('because') (vv. 35–36), mark off the conclusion to the address." Waltke, *The Book of
Proverbs Chapters 1–15*, 423 (italics mine).

[59] See 72 and 73.

characteristic tense/aspect of the mainline of a discourse may be extended to unexpected uses at peak.[60]

According to Longacre, this major block of fatherly discourses in Prov 1–7 "phases out" after it peaks in chapter 8, and the dominant tense/aspect (the father) is "substituted for" by a different tense/aspect (Lady Wisdom). Longacre emphasizes that recognizing "peak" is "especially crucial" in the surface structure of a discourse.[61] For a clear understanding of chapter 8, it is essential to observe how the elaboration of the peak marks the unreachable root of wisdom for a young listener. Since the supreme nature of wisdom is hard to understand for a human being who has only limited knowledge, the peak/climax therefore produces a rhetorical effect that motivates the listener to praise and accept the wisdom from above.

Second, the development sequence of personified Wisdom intentionally highlights the climax in Prov 8. The device of personified Wisdom is an intentional rhetorical/stylistic device to craft the material of the same kind into a coherent whole.[62] Structurally the section of Prov 1:20–33, where Lady Wisdom occurs as a first–person speaker for the first time, is set as a companion piece to Prov 8.[63] Then Lady Wisdom is

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[60] Longacre, *The Grammar of Discourse*, 38.

[61] Ibid.

[62] Camp postulates this idea and insists: "the use of the stylistic device of personification augments meaning in a particular manner that aids the editor in crafting this material into a coherent whole." Camp, *Wisdom and the Feminine in the Book of Proverbs*, 209. Also according to Camp, "Considered from a grammatical point of view, personification has the effect of making proper nouns out of common nouns and thereby making them 'one–member class nouns.' Personification thus stylistically stresses the unity of the subject." Ibid., 214. If Camp's opinion on wisdom's personification is acceptable, there must be some sort of relationship existing among the sections of Prov 1:20–33; 3:13–20; 8:1–36; 9:1–18.

[63] Clifford sides for this opinion and consider that "within chaps. 1–9, chap. 8 is the companion piece to 1:20–33, Wisdom's first speech in which Wisdom spoke harshly, threatening to walk away from anyone who rejected her. Only in the last verse did she offer a promise ('But the one who listens to me will dwell secure, /will be at rest, past fearing disaster') Perhaps her abrupt harshness is reaction to the seductive proposal to youth in 1:8–19. In chap. 8, on the contrary, Wisdom speaks nothing but as assurances and promises, threatening only in the final verse ('But whoever passes me by harms himself; all who hate me love death'). Chapter 8 balances the first speech; it also provides an effective foil to the deceptive woman

introduced as the third person in Prov 3:13–20, in which she is used for Yahweh's

creational works (3:19–20).[64] As is discussed previously,[65] the first half in Prov 1–9 (1:8–

4:19) is wisdom–centered, and the structure around the third fatherly discourse (3:1–20)

concentrically focuses on the center of wisdom (3:13–20). Thus this rhetorical design is

set to highlight the climax in Prov 8 (8:22–31).

Third, Lady Wisdom is placed side by side with the adulteress in Prov 7 to form a

climactic contrast in Prov 8. Lady Wisdom is juxtaposed with the adulteress, the wild

seductress who is the representative of anti–wisdom in the tenth fatherly discourse (7:6–

27) and serves as her antithesis.[66] The role of Lady Wisdom in Prov 8 serves as an

antidote to the perversion that is promoted by the strange woman in the previous

chapters, particularly in Prov 7. According to Camp, the similar vocabularies/concepts

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in chap. 7." Clifford, *Proverbs*, 93–4.

[64] The section of Prov 3:13–20 is associated to the section of Prov 8:1–36 in several ways. First, the language of personification is similar (e.g., personified Wisdom). Second, both of them exhort to pursue wisdom (3:13–18; 8:4–11). Third, both of them relate wisdom to Yahweh's creational works (3:19–20; 8:22–31). As Garrett observes, "In a carefully crafted quatrain, vv. 19–20 (3:19–20) assert Wisdom's role in creation. It is a fitting appendix to the previous hymn. This section *anticipates* 8:22–31." Garrett, *Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs*, 82–3 (italics mine). If Garrett is correct, this anticipation is preparing the coming of the climax in Prov 8.

[65] See 73–9; also cf. 79–90.

[66] Both the Targum and the Peshitta Syriac have a "therefore" in the beginning of Prov 8:1 and intend to connect the two paired poems deliberately. The causality that exists in Prov 1–7 and Prov 8–9 was considered reasonable and unavoidable in the early witness of the text. The adulteress who has demonstrated the extreme incarnation of evil in Prov 7:6–27 breaks as many moral and religious regulations as she can. Instead of finding life like those who find wisdom and favor from the Lord (8:35), the victim of this seductress will go to Sheol and the chambers of death (7:27). In order to create a rhetorical effect, this seductress provides the type of *antithesis* to personified Wisdom described in chapter 8. In vocabulary and structure, Aletti provides his analysis for the antithesis between the adulteress and personified Wisdom. See Jean N. Aletti, "Séduction et Parole en Proverbes I–IX." *VT* 27 (1977): 129–144. Camp sees the effect of antithesis/contrast between the two women as follows: "One embraces (*hbq*) Wisdom (4.8) or the bosom of the strange woman (5:20). One grasps (*hzb*) Wisdom and Instruction (3.18; 4.13) or is grasped by the woman wily of heart (7.13). Both Wisdom and the adulteress are 'in the streets' and 'in the marketplace' (1.20–21; 7.12). The teaching (*lqh*) of the sage (1.5; 4.2; 9.9) becomes the seductive speech of the adulteress (7.21). Both Wisdom and Folly offer bread (*lhm*) at their banquet (9.5, 17). The imagery of water is used both to allure the young man to his own wife (5.15–18) and to seduce him to Folly's house (9.17). With either the wife (5.19) or the adulteress (7.18) he can fill himself (*rwh*) with love (*ddym*)." Camp, *Wisdom and the Feminine in the Book of Proverbs*, 118.

used by the two women always bring in confusion, and "this confusion of values that is always possible in the human realm can only be combated by reference to a tradition that is understood to have its origin with the divine."[67] "This tradition is personified in Prov 8 as antithesis and antidote to that perversion of language embodied in the seductive speech of the strange woman. Wisdom speaks truth (8.6–8)."[68]

Fourth, Prov 8 summarizes what has been revealed about the pursuit (vv. 4–11; cf. 1:23–24; 3:13–18; 4:7–8), virtues (v. 8, 20; cf. 2:7–9), the values (vv. 10–11, 19; cf. 2:4, 3:14–18; 4:9), protection/reminding (vv. 7–8, 33–36; cf. 1:22–33; 2:7–8, 10–19, 4:11–13; 5:1–2) and blessings (vv. 15–21, 34–36; cf. 3:13–18; 4:9) of wisdom. It then carries the discussion into a higher field, the origin of wisdom (vv. 22–31; cf. 3:19–20), namely Yahweh Himself. After the summary, the *shema* message (8:32–36) comes out with the vocative calling (בָּנִים) (8:32), echoing the previous vocatives (בְּנִי and בָּנִים) in the fatherly discourses and preparing for the final conclusion in Prov 9. This rhetorical strategy directly brings the connection of wisdom to the rhetorical motto "the fear of Yahweh" in Prov 9 (9:10) and binds the entire block of Prov 1–9 into an integral whole.

The place of Prov 8 is significant and necessary for the entire structure of Prov 1–9 because it highlights the climax of the structure that is developed throughout the prologue (1:2–7) and the fatherly discourses in Prov 1–7. The father uses his rhetoric to change the aspect of the speaker (father→Lady Wisdom) and summarize his teaching about wisdom in order to produce a climax. This climax is predicted and prepared in the wisdom–centered structure of the first five fatherly discourses (1:8–4:19) and further emphasized by the contrast of the evil–focused structure of the second five fatherly discourses (4:20–

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[67] Ibid.

[68] Ibid. Also see the relevant discussion in Aletti, "Séduction et Parole en Proverbes I–IX," 140–4.

7–:27). Finally, the father creates a magnificent climax through Lady Wisdom in Prov 8.

(2) Conclusion in Proverbs 9: Chapter 9, then, functions as a concluding poem for the entire block of Prov 1–9 and presents its rhetorical structure along with the father's final comment through the lips of Lady Wisdom (9:7–12). It also presents the final contrast of Lady Wisdom (9:1–6) and Dame Folly (9:13–18).[69] Proverbs 8 and 9 cannot be separated from each other because the same role of Lady Wisdom continues to dominate the text (9:1–12). The structure of the conclusion of the father's instruction is as follows:

Table 12. Conclusion of the Father's Instruction (Prov 9:1–18)

Lady Wisdom vs. Dame Folly: Conclusion of the Father's Instruction	Prov 9:1–18
Father's Introduction	Prov 9:1–3
Lady Wisdom's Sayings	Prov 9:4–6
Lady Wisdom's Conclusion: Father's Final Comment	Prov 9:7–12
Father's Introduction	Prov 9:13–15
Dame Folly's Sayings	Prov 9:16–18

In order to avoid interrupting a holistic perspective (Prov 1–9), the father provides introductions for both Lady Wisdom and Dame Folly, who are introduced in the *third person.* (9:1–3, 13–15; cf. 8:1–3 and 1:20–21). Lady Wisdom and Dame Folly start to give their own speeches in the *first person* (Prov 9:5–12 and 16–17) only after the

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[69] Horne supports this idea and indicates: "Chapter 9 of the book of Proverbs functions as a concluding poem to the entire collection of instructions contained in Proverbs 1–9. The poem makes explicit what has heretofore only been implied: Woman Wisdom has a diabolical opponent in Woman Folly. In the poem dealing with this 'other' woman (vv. 13–18) readers encounter Wisdom's competitor, Folly, personified in a fashion similar to Wisdom herself. In fact, we shall see that there are some striking similarities between these two. Through the juxtaposition of these two women readers are afforded the opportunity to look back on the admonitions from Woman Wisdom about the 'other' woman who seduces young men." Horne, *Proverbs–Ecclesiastes*, 133.

common rhetorical formulae are used.[70] The father creates a *conclusio* (9:7–12)

sandwiched by the two personified figures so that the final fatherly comment in Lady

Wisdom's mouth is recognized easily (9:7–12), and so the listener may choose between

good and evil.

The final chapter of Prov 1–9 not only concludes with a choice but also invites a

choice. The listener is invited to make a wise decision for life. Again the father does not

speak directly to his son, but rather uses his indirect rhetoric to make his invitation

acceptable, that is, through the metaphorical figures played by Lady Wisdom and Dame

Folly. A skillful parallelism is used in the two female roles which are miniatures of the

previously–mentioned women (Lady Wisdom in chapter 8 and the adulteress in chapter

7). The recapturing of these two personae stirs up the memory of what has been

mentioned about good and evil in the former chapters so that the listener may know

which choice to make.

The two women stand in parallel positions on both ends of this poem (Prov 9). Both

of them are introduced by the father. (vv. 1–3 // vv. 13–15). Lady Wisdom is rich and

well–prepared (vv. 1–2) while Dame Folly has nothing and knows nothing (v. 13); both

call from the highest places (v. 3 // v. 14); both call the simple with the same words (v. 4

// v. 16); both prepare food or drink, but one is delicious and the other stolen (v. 5 // v.

17); Lady Wisdom has a way of understanding (v. 6) while Dame Folly leads to the

depths of hell. For the sake of rhetorical strategy, the father intends to highlight his

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[70] The common rhetorical formulae: "מִי־פֶתִי יָסֻר הֵנָּה חֲסַר־לֵב אָמְרָה לּוֹ" ("Whoever is simple, let him turn in here! To him who lacks understanding [heart] she says,") appear in 9:4 and 16. There is a minor difference of an additional *waw* in 9:16b. Some ancient Syriac manuscripts have a *waw* with אָמְרָה in 9:4b to equalize the formula with 9:16. The witness of Septuagint that has "παρακελεύομαι λέγουσα" ("I exhort and say") in 9:16b is not so convincing because the Greek translation is "not quite natural, since Folly would not address her intended victims as void of sense." C. H. Toy, *Proverbs* (ICC; Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1988), 190.

suggestion/comment (9:7–12) through the parallel positions made by the contrast of Lady

Wisdom and Dame Folly.[71] The rhetorical design is concentric as follows:

Table 13. Concentric Structure in Proverbs 9

Lady Wisdom (9:1–6):6 lines/40 words
Lady Wisdom' Conclusion: Father's Final Comment (9:7–12): 6 lines/46 words (center)
Dame Folly (9:13–18): 6 lines/41 words

According to this structure, the balance that exists in both ends of the poem appears

in images (woman v.s. woman), in the number of lines (6 lines v.s. 6 lines) and in the

length of words (40 words v.s. 41 words) so that the difference of the central place (6

lines/46 words) is concentrically focused.[72] Meynet speaks about the value of a center in

Hebrew rhetoric:

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[71] Meinhold presents the parallel positions of the two women in this way:

a. Preparation for the meal	1–3	13–15
Designation	1aα	13aα
Activity/Attributes	1aβ–3	13aβ–15
Call out	3a	15
Location	3b	14b
b. Invitation	4–5	16–17
Invitation to gullible	4a	16a
Invitation to brainless	4b	16b
Offer of symbolic foods	5	17
c. Conclusion: life or death	6	18

See the table and analysis in Arndt Meinhold, *Die Sprüche* (ZBK 1; Zürich: Theologischer, 1991), 150–1.

[72] In the Hebrew Bible, there are several cases that have focal point in the middle. For stance, Jonah 1:4–16 "is built according to a concentric or chiastic pattern with a conclusion." R. Reed Lessing, *Jonah* (St. Louis: Concordia, 2007), 62. Lessing explains this concentric structure this way: "In the Hebrew text, there are ninety–four words from 1:4, the beginning of the scene, to the beginning of the speech in 1:9. There are also ninety–four words in 1:10–15. The conclusion in Jonah 1:16 stands outside the pattern. Both the chiastic structure and the exact balance of number of words (ninety–four) both before and after the speech in 1:9 serve to place the focus of scene 2 on Jonah's confession of faith in 1:9, which stands at the midpoint of this chiastic structure." Ibid. Cf. the central place of the Immanuel prophecy (Isa 7:14) in Isa 2–12. Andrew H. Bartelt, *The Book around Immanuel: Style and Structure in Isaiah 2–12* (Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 1996), 256. And also see the following similar cases: the focal place of Exod 15:11 in Exod 15:1–18 (Song of Moses); the numerical middle (Ps 23:4) in Ps 23:1–6. See these cases in footnote 3 in Lessing, *Jonah*, 63.

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Instead of developing its argumentation in a linear way, in the Graeco–Roman fashion, to a conclusion which is the point of resolution of the discourse, it is organized most of the time in an involutive manner around a centre which is the focal point, the keystone, through which the rest finds cohesion. The centre of concentric construction most of the time presents certain specific characteristics: it is often of a different shape and genre than the rest of the text, it is very often a question, or at least something which is problematic, which in all cases is enigmatic.[73]

It is not surprising that the central place of Prov 9:7–12 (its center is 9:10), the keystone of Prov 9 and the conclusion of Prov 1–9, presents a different shape/genre from the rest of text, namely the metaphorical descriptions of the two women (9:1–6, 13–18). Employing this concentric arrangement, the father continues the rhetorical force of personification (Lady Wisdom) built in Prov 8, thus connecting Prov 9 not only with Prov 8 but also the fatherly discourses in Prov 1–7.

In fact, the debate on the nature of this passage (9:7–12) is usually caused by misrecognizing its continuity. According to Fox, "The later scribe who inserted these verses apparently doubted that the 'callow' and 'senseless' are the right recipients of the invitation to wisdom, and so introduced a caveat."[74] Fox's assumption simply makes this passage a discontinuity in its context without seeing its rhetorical connection with the

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[73] Meynet, *Rhetorical Analysis*, 175.

[74] Fox, *Proverbs 1–9*, 306. Fox also indicates: "This passage is undoubtedly an addition. It interrupts Wisdom's speech and is inappropriately interposed between the injunction in v 6 and natural sequel in v 11, which give the reason (introduced by causal *ki*) for the injunction...The passage does not echo the vocabulary of the preceding section and does not confront Wisdom's invitation directly; it speaks instead to the issue of effective chastisement. It appears, then, that the present passage originated as an *independent* epigram and was subsequently inserted as a response to Wisdom's summons of the ignorant." Ibid. (italics mine) Disagreeing with Fox, Murphy argues for the "delicate operation" in the structure in Prov 9 and indicates, "If they are an insertion, are they really interruptive? What was the intention behind this? It is a *delicate operation* to determine the 'intention' in such a case. Ultimately we tend to ascribe motives, always based of course on the thrust of these verses, to another hand. Indeed, we may rightly assume that the architect of this final contrast regarded, or would have regarded, the intervening verses as somehow necessary or at least fitting. In that case, can we legitimately conclude that they are an insertion? Could they not have been there from the beginning? Our Concept of logic and esthetics is modern and has its own presuppositions. We cannot glibly assume that the ancients operate along the same line." Murphy, *Proverbs*, 61 (italics mine).

neighboring sections. Opposing Fox's opinion and considering the passage's thematic

and stylistic connection in the rhetorical structure of Prov 9, Waltke proposes the

composition in Prov 9:7–12 in this way:[75]

> I. The consequences to the sage for correcting the proud rather than the wise
> (9:7–9);
> II. Janus: the beginning and gain of wisdom (9:10);
> III. The consequences to oneself of being wise or mocker (9:11–12).

In addition, there are three more reasons to support the place of conclusion (Prov 9)

in Prov 1–9. First, the two women draw on the sketches of both personified Woman and

the adulteress in the earlier chapters, encouraging a better choice between life and death.

As Clifford asserts,

> The chapter (Prov 9) brings the first major part of Proverbs (Prov 1–9) to a
> close. It draws on the sketches of the seductive woman in earlier instructions
> for its conterportrait to Woman Wisdom. In the two portraits of chap. 9, life
> and death are set off starkly against each other, evoking the life and death
> choice of Deut. 30:15–20.[76]

Second, the repetition of the rhetorical motto "the fear of Yahweh" strengthens the

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[75] See Waltke, *The Book of Proverbs: Chapters 1–15*, 439. According to this composition, "Verses 7–9 contrast the opposing responses of the mocker and the wise with the corresponding negative and positive effects that their responses have on the wisdom teacher, namely, rejection and shame over against acceptance and love. This notion *suits* the invitation to those potentially educable in vv. 1–6, for they contain a veiled admonition to invite those capable of becoming wise as well as a veiled warning not to invite the mocker. The invitation entails a rebuke: 'abandon the gullible.' Mockers by disposition cannot accept such an implicit rebuke. Verses 11–12 contrast the personal gain of being wise with the great loss of being a mocker. Verse 10, which forms an *inclusio* with 1:7, functions as janus verse. Looking back to vv. 7–9, v. 10a states that the essential foundation of being educable or wise is 'fear of the LORD,' and looking ahead, v. 10b names 'insight' from knowing the Holy One as the essential foundation for wisdom's benefits (vv. 11–12a). By placing the positive benefits of wisdom first (v. 11) and the negative consequences of mocking last (v. 12), the poet not only forms a chiastic *inclusio* with the first strophe (proud–wise [vv. 7–9] versus wised–proud [v. 12]) but also offers a good transition to Folly's invitation in vv. 13–18. The wise belong to the guests hosted by Wisdom and the proud to the adherents of Folly." Ibid. See also the relevant discussion in Plöger, *Sprüche Salomos*, 105–6; Derek Kidner, *The Proberbs: An Introduction and Commentary* (TOTC; Downers Grove, Ill.: Inter–Varsity Press, 1964), 82.

[76] Clifford, *Proverbs*, 105. If Clifford's opinion on the rhetorical functions of these two women is accepted, the rhetorical design of this smaller contrast represents the larger portrays of the same content in entire Prov 1–8. The purposeful repetition is significant in reminding the listener/reader of what is said. As a matter as an effect, this concluding arrangement can help the listener/reader have the appropriate information to make a better choice.

place of conclusion in Prov 9. Lady Wisdom's conclusion—which is also the final

father's statement (9:7–12)—is *centered* on the phrase, "the fear of Yahweh" (9:10),[77]

which makes a greater *inclusio* with the other phrase in Prov 1:7 to cover the entire block

of Prov 1–9.[78] The place of the rhetorical motto is purposeful in that it forms the key

which the listener is encouraged to use in making his choices. The wholeness in the

inclusio ought not be broken, and so the holistic perspective of Prov 1–9 should also be

recognized. This kind of ending that the father's rhetoric gives to the whole section of

Prov 1–9 provides a significant support for the continuity and unity of the entire text.

Thus it is clear that Prov 8–9 plays a significant and inseparable part in the entire

structure of Prov 1–9. The father's rhetoric continues from the fatherly discourses of Prov

1–7 into the block of Prov 8–9. This makes chapter 8 the climax in Prov 1–9. And the

conclusion of Prov 9 becomes reasonable as it asks the listener for a choice between the

representatives of good and evil (Lady Wisdom and Dame Folly). The block of Prov 8–9

would be inexplicable without the father's rhetoric in Prov 1–7, and the block of Prov 1–

7 would be inconsistent and going nowhere without the climax and conclusion in Prov 8–

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[77] It is obvious that the rhetorical place of this motto, "the fear of Yahweh" is the center both of the father's final statement (9:7–12) and of the whole block of chapter 9. This central arrangement intends to highlight the place of the father's final statement which should be distinguished from the sections of the two personified figures (Lady Wisdom and Dame Folly). It is also intended to manifest the significance of the father's rhetoric. This father's final statement presents the two kinds of men, namely the scoffer/wicked man (9:7–8a) and the righteous/wise man (9:8b–9), and the possible responses/choices that they would make. The listener is given a choice to be scoffing or wise (9:11). Once a better choice is made with the help of the speaking father ("by me" in 9:11a), a long or prosperous life is promised (9:11).

[78] As Leeuwen indicates, "The great phrase "the fear of the Lord" grounds human knowledge and wisdom (cf. 9:10) in humble service of Yahweh. This phrase frames the first section of the book (1:7; 9:10), as well as the whole book (1:7; 31:31). The book of Proverbs is meant to teach humans wisdom. But the fear of the Lord relativizes human wisdom, because the mysterious freedom of God can subvert human plans and purposes (16:1, 9; 19:21; 21:30–31; 27:1). Without the God of Israel, the best human wisdom becomes folly, because God alone holds the world and all outcomes in God's hands (2Sam 16:15–17:23; 1Cor 1:18–31, with its OT quotations)." Van Leeuwen, *Proverbs*, 33 (italics Van Leeuwen's). For the more insight to this rhetorical motto, Leeuwen also explains: "The fear of Yahweh is the absolute beginning and foundation of wisdom. On this foundation, the opening verses lay down the great concepts that give order and coherence to the bewildering diversity of insights and admonitions in Proverbs as a whole." Ibid., 34.

9.

Summary

This section on the issue of structure presents the unity of Prov 1–9. Although there are some other approaches to the structure, they are either inconsistent in the categorization (Skehan), break the unity of the text (Fox), or miss the progressive development of the text (Waltke). This study provides a rhetorical structure (see Table 4)[79] which is "progressive, systematic, and comprehensive,"[80] keeping the original features of each genre (e.g., fatherly discourse and wisdom speech) and revealing the unity of the text according to what the present text really contains. Just as the structure of the father's rhetoric supports the unity of Proverbs 1–9, this study will now examine the way the father's rhetorical content arrangement does the same.

Content Arrangement of the Father's Rhetoric

This section emphasizes the continuity of Prov 1–9. If Proverbs 1–9 is as unified as the structure indicates, there should also be evidence of a proper content arrangement. Alter suggests that "the impulse of semantic intensification, as we observe it working from verset to verset and from line to line, would lead us to expect a continuous linear development to a climax, or to a climax and reversal."[81] This observation concerning the development of Hebrew poetry is in fact mirrored in the content arrangement of Prov 1–9, described below.

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[79] See Table 4 in 72.

[80] Ernst R. Wendland, "The Discourse Analysis of Hebrew Poetry," 1.

[81] Alter, *The Art of Biblical Poetry*, 72. What Alter concerns here is simply the continuity of the text. Although the artistic performances of the text can be various in form (e.g., the direct instruction from father or indirect teaching from personified Wisdom), the text is written for achieving useful communication. Without a consistent manner in semantics, the text would become scattered and pointless, thus losing continuity within itself as well as appropriate understanding."

In order to achieve a continuity and progression of thought in Prov 1–9, the following three perspectives are used: a progressive mode of wisdom lessons (from easy–to–learn to hard–to–learn), a contrasting development between wisdom and anti–wisdom, and fatherly comments that move the thought flow forward.

Progressive Perspective

The wisdom lessons in Prov 1–9 show progression, from easy–to–learn lessons to hard–to–learn ones. In his study on continuity and discontinuity in Hebrew poetic discourse, Wendland states:

> The principle of *continuity* is reflected in the tendency of a well–formed composition to manifest the features of progression and coherence. *Progression* has reference to the sense of forward direction that a coherent text exhibits. The discourse is going somewhere, from A to B and even on to Z in a manner that continually advances, unfolds, fulfills, or develops the message. This movement may not be evident immediately, but after several careful readings or hearings it should become apparent to the majority of receptors.[82]

The continuity and coherence of Prov 1–9 encountered by the first time listener/reader is the result of a network built by the connected terminology. In the content arrangement of Prov 1–9, synonyms for wisdom prepare the network for a progressive mode in the prologue as well as in the exordia of each fatherly discourse. In order to demonstrate this progression, we will now investigate the wisdom indicators (חָכְמָה and חָכְמוֹת) that reveal the wisdom lessons, the patterns of wisdom (earthly and heavenly), and the progressive quantity (see the following discussion).

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[82] Ernst R. Wendland, "Continuity and Discontinuity in Hebrew Poetic Design: Patterns and Points of Significance in the Structure and Setting of Psalm 30" in *Discourse Perspectives on Hebrew Poetry in the Scriptures*, 29 (italics Wendland's). Wendland makes some further explanation and says, "Progression may be *syntagmatic* (temporal/consequential) or *paradigmatic* (spatial/descriptive) in nature, and this tendency is normally experienced in some tangible way as one proceeds through the text. Thus one should be able to discern that the author's message is being meaningfully composed and brought to a state of completion, for example, in the form of a narrative, exposition, exhortation, argument, description, or some poetic expression." (italics Wendland's) Ibid.

(1) Wisdom Indicators

The wisdom indicators, either in singular or plural form ((חָכְמָה or חָכְמוֹת) are designed to help the listener/reader locate the wisdom lessons.[83] These indicators are usually put at the head of the wisdom lessons, distinguishing their contents from those of the neighboring fatherly discourses. The list of wisdom lessons developed through personification is as follows:

Table 14. Wisdom Lessons through Personification Led by the Wisdom Indicators

חָכְמוֹת Group	Wisdom lesson in Prov 1:20–33 (חָכְמוֹת appears as the first word of the entire section.)
	Wisdom lesson in Prov 9:1–12 (חָכְמוֹת appears as the first word of the entire section.)
חָכְמָה Group	Wisdom lesson in Prov 3:13–20 (חָכְמָה appears in the first colon [3:13a] of the entire section)
	Wisdom lesson Prov 8:1–36 (חָכְמָה appears in the first colon [8:1a] of the entire section)

These four wisdom lessons are where the father's teaching mostly concentrates on the topic of wisdom in Prov 1–9, employing the language of personification to address their issues. The sequence of these four indicators and their following lessons are: חָכְמוֹת → חָכְמוֹת → חָכְמָה → חָכְמָה. The two outside indicators (חָכְמוֹת) that are in Prov 1 (1:20) and Prov 9 (9:1) work with the rhetorical motto "the fear of Yahweh" that is also in these two chapters (1:7a and 9:10a) to form an *inclusio* for the entire Prov 1–9, emphasizing the role of wisdom. Along with the rhetorical structure in Prov 1–9 (see

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[83] The wisdom indicators either in singular (חָכְמָה) or plural (חָכְמוֹת) used to be translated into English singular term "wisdom" by most modern translations (KJV, NKJ, ASV, NAS, RSV, NRS, NIV, BBE, NJB, NAB). This study considers the different forms of wisdom have some rhetorical function, for instance, indicating where the wisdom lesson is of a special concern.

Tables 4),[84] these wisdom lessons with their indicators, supported by the in the fatherly

discourses,[85] reach a climax in Prov 8 and come to a conclusion in Prov 9, thus forming a

progressive development and demonstrating the consistency of the content arrangement

(2) From Earthly to Heavenly Pattern

The progressive development of the wisdom lessons from the easy–to–learn to

hard–to–learn mode is a progressive pattern, that is, one that moves from the earthly to

the heavenly. The idea of wisdom is intentionally associated with divinity at the very

beginning of the text, namely in the rhetorical phrase "the fear of Yahweh" (1:7). This

implication guides the following moral discussions either in fatherly discourses or in

wisdom speeches into the heavenly connection, signaling the deep and mysterious root of

wisdom in advance.

Drawing on earthly experience, the father gives his discourses to warn the son to

avoid evil company (1:8–19) and to cherish the value of wisdom (2:1–22). When the

listener turns his attention to the father's instruction, the father brings personified

Wisdom on the stage (1:20–33) to impact his son by focusing on the wisdom that has

been produced or accumulated through the living experience of the father. For his

listening lad, the father gradually discloses the higher level on which wisdom can benefit

the willing possessor (3:1–12). At this point, the wisdom of human morality is lifted

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[84] See 72.

[85] Apparently the father makes the concept of wisdom and its synonyms always occur in the prologue (1:2–7) and each exordium of the fatherly discourse so that the consistency of thought flow can continue. The indicator חָכְמָה appears in exordiums of the 2nd (2:2a), 8th (5:1a) and 10th (7:4a) fatherly discourses. The synonyms of wisdom such as מוּסָר ("instruction"), אִמְרֵי ("speeches/words"), בִּינָה ("understanding"), הַשְׂכֵּל ("being prudent/ prudence"), עָרְמָה ("prudence"), דַּעַת ("knowledge"), מְזִמָּה ("discretion"), לֶקַח ("learning") and תַּחְבֻּלוֹת ("counsels") also appears in the exordia of the 1st (1:8a), 3rd (3:4a), 4th (4:21b), 5th (4:10a); 6th (4:20b), 9th (6:23b) fatherly discourses and the father's interlude (4:1a, 1b, 2a). These indicators and synonyms are supporting the progressive development of the content arrangement.

above the level of general human experience and directed to the Creator of wisdom (3:13–20). A move from the easy–to–learn (earthly) to the hard–to–learn mode (heavenly) thus becomes apparent in the light of the father's rhetoric.

This movement rises to a temporary peak when the origin of wisdom is revealed with Yahweh (3:19–20), the Creator of all. Not until the next peak takes place in chapter 8 does the thought flow (content arrangement) move back to earthly life and stay in human experience. Descending from the peak, the fourth fatherly discourse focuses on ordinary life with one's neighbors (3:21–35, particularly vv. 28–31), the outsiders.

The fatherly interlude/statement to *sons* (4:1–9) starts to move into the family tradition, in which the family ethic is built and from which other moral behaviors are derived. Wisdom is learned and transmitted from one generation to the next through human experience, but there is a problem: the man who is seduced by sin may lose his mind to all kinds of temptations and walk away from wisdom. Therefore the focus of the last five fatherly discourses (the sixth to tenth fatherly discourses) is to avoid evil. Avoidance of evil is discussed in the series of the fatherly instructions in a step by step fashion (see the *Three Levels* of the adulteress in Table 7).[86]

Following the progressive arrangement of the father's rhetoric, the hardest wisdom lesson appears in chapter 8. Wisdom that is personified (8:1–5) and full of values (8:6–12) not only dominates worldly affairs (8:14–17) but also participates in the work of creation with Yahweh (8:22–31). Human learning is lifted to an extremely high level. The listener, under the speaker's guidance, is led into a world of mystery different from his earthly experience. This experience of wisdom is beyond imagination and words

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[86] See Table 7 in 80 and also the discussion in 79–90.

because it reaches the root of wisdom in the beginning of creation. Wisdom is experienced and accumulated in the earthly life of human beings, but its root extends as far as to the Creator's existence, in which perishable men never have a share.

If the wisdom lesson of chapter 8 expresses the mysterious origin of wisdom, the lesson in chapter 9 relates to the choice of wisdom. The different degrees of lessons in wisdom from easy–to–learn to hard–to–learn are not meant to confuse the listener but rather to lift up his vision of life to a higher, divine level. That is, only when the listener is faithful (שָׁמַע) to the original Provider of wisdom (Yahweh) can the lessons of wisdom be learned and the reality of wisdom be reached. So in this pious obedience to Yahweh (9:10), the listener has to make a critical decision between good (9:1–6) and evil (9:13–18). The father's statement (9:7–12) given through the mouth of Lady Wisdom is the clear guide to decision–making for the listener. The wisdom formula, namely "the fear of Yahweh" (9:10), is in the central place of the father's statement, rhetorically recalling the same formula in the prologue (1:7) and hence providing the foundation of wisdom for everything said in Prov 1–9.

Above all, the lessons of wisdom that move from easy–to–learn to hard–to–learn serve to demonstrate that the thought flow of Prov 1–9 is consistent in its development. The wisdom materials in Prov 1–9, particularly the block of Prov 8–9, are not discontinuities as the redactional critics believe. Rather, the connection with Prov 8–9 is prepared as early as in Prov 1 (1:20–33) and 3 (3:13–20). For a holistic reading of Prov 1–9, the sequence of wisdom lessons (in chapters 1, 3, 8 and 9) that are intentionally set among the fatherly discourses function as catalysts to indicate the emphasis of the father's rhetoric. When the idea of wisdom is developed progressively from easy–to–

learn to hard–to–learn mode, the listener/reader may become more knowledgeable and wiser in making better choices before Yahweh.

(3) Progressive Quantity

The progressive mode of the wisdom lessons from easy–to–learn to hard–to–learn is also noticeable when the length of each text is examined. Not only the depth of the content but the length of each lesson increases, as seen in the table below.

Table 15. Length and Word Quantity List of the Wisdom Lessons

Wisdom Lessons	Total Lines	Total Cola	Total Words
Proverbs 1:20–33	14	17	105
Proverbs 3:13–20 (3:19–20)	8 (2)	16 (4)	54 (13)
Proverbs 8:1–36 (8:22–31)	36 (10)	40 (12)	258 (76)
Proverbs 9:1–12	12	24	86

The central place of 8:1–36 is highlighted by its emphasis through length (2–3 times more than the other lessons). The total of both 8:1–36 and 9:1–12 in lines (36+12=48), in cola (40+24=64) and in words (258+86=344) are roughly two times than the total of both 1:20–33 and 3:13–20 in lines (14+8=22), in cola (17+16=33) and in words (105+54=159). The difference in quantity clearly shows a progression here in the father's rhetoric. This hypothesis is also confirmed by the quantitive difference of the description concerning wisdom's origin. There are two lines, four cola and thirteen words in the section Prov 3:19–20 but the section of Prov 8:22–31 possesses roughly three–six times (10 lines / 12 cola / 76 words) more than it. This evidence helps to illustrate that the father's rhetoric in Prov 1–7 (namely 1:20–33 plus 3:13–20) continues and climaxes in Prov 8–9 (namely 8:1–36 plus 9:1–12) because there is consistency in both blocks and an

apparent emphasis in the later block.

Consistency clearly exists between Prov 1–7 and 8–9, as this study sees from the terminology (especial synonyms), indicators, progressive patterns (from the earthly to heavenly) and the length and word quantity perspective. The father's rhetoric is both skillful and progressive.

Contrastive Perspective

A contrastive perspective also provides evidence to prove the consistency of the content arrangement in Prov 1–9. The contrastive skill is one of the common features in Hebrew poetry and is used frequently.[87] In its function, "contrast pivots on a dual opposition, i.e., a pair of antonyms (or positive versus negative of the same predicate) plus another paired opposition, whether of participants, locales, times, instruments, and the like."[88] Especially in the second half of the ten fatherly discourses (4:20–7:27), the opposite side of wisdom (the adulteress/the strange woman) is introduced in an intensified manner (see Tables 4 and 7)[89] in order to achieve an effect of exhortation by warning. This section investigates the anti–wisdom indicators, the juxtaposition of wisdom and anti–wisdom materials, and the contrastive ending of Prov 1–9 in the father's rhetoric.

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[87] In his approach to Hebrew poetic discourse, Wendland considers contrastive skill is a pervasive repetition "which is often positioned in the form of *symmetrical patterns*, both linear and concentric, local and global, having an important structural function (e.g., segmentation, versification) or thematic purpose (e.g., prominence, cohesion) in the discourse." Ernst R. Wendland, "The Discourse Analysis of Hebrew Poetry," 4 (italics Wendland's).

[88] Longacre, *The Grammar of Discourse*, 104.

[89] See 72 and 80.

(1) Anti–Wisdom Indicators

Sections of anti–wisdom description are usually signaled by indicators in order to

produce a contrast illuminating the positive (wisdom). In the rhetorical design of the

father's rhetoric, the fatherly warnings against the adulteress are marked off by these

indicators: the strange woman (אִשָּׁה זָרָה or זָרָה in Prov 2:16; 5:3, 20; 7:5),[90] the foreign

woman (נָכְרִיָּה) in 5:20; 6:24; cf. 20:16; 23:27; 27:13)[91] and Dame Folly (אֵשֶׁת כְּסִילוּת) in

Prov 9:13; cf. 9:13–18).[92] The first two indicators (זָרָה/אִשָּׁה זָרָה and נָכְרִיָּה) signal the

four special passages (2:16–22; 5:1–23; 6:20–35; 7:1–27) concerning the adulteress.[93] As

Fox indicates,

> The Strange Woman (to use the conventional but misleading designation) is a
> type–figure representing any seductive, adulterous woman. The allegorical
> interpretation, which most commonly understands the woman as a cipher for

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[90] The word אִשָּׁה זָרָה or זָרָה always causes confusion in translation. This word is literally translated into "the strange woman" according its root זור (be a stranger or become estranged). However, the translation of this term becomes various, for instances, the loose woman (RSV, NRS), the immoral woman (NKJ), the adulteress (NIV, NAB), the woman who belongs to another (NJB), the forbidden woman (Clifford) and the unchaste wife (Waltke). See Clifford, *Proverbs*, 44 and 48; Waltke, *The Book of Proverbs Chapters 1–15*, 120. These translations either paraphrase or interpret according to its context. The translation of the strange woman that this study uses is also supported by the English translations (KJV, ASV, NAS, NAU) and the current commentators (Horne, Fox, Longman and etc.) See Milton P. Horne, *Proverbs–Ecclesiastes*, 46; Fox, *Proverbs 1–9*, 134; and Longman, *Proverbs*, 123–5.

[91] Some English versions translate this word into "an adulteress" (NRS, NAB), "a foreigner" (ASV, NAS, NAU), "an adventuress" (RSV), "a seductress" (NKJ), "a stranger" (KJV), "another woman" (BBE), "another man's wife" (NIV) and "a woman who belongs to another" (NJB). In fact, this adjective used as the noun literally means "foreign" or "alien." This study follows its literal meaning and translate it into "the foreign woman."

[92] Most of the modern English versions translate this term into "the foolish woman" or "the woman of folly" (KJV, NKJ, ASV, NAS, RSV, NRS and BBE), which can catch its literal meaning but miss its personification effect in the context. Only NIV and NAB notice the personification of the woman and translate the term as "the woman Folly." This study uses "Dame Folly" for the translation in order to contrast the other personified figure, Lady Wisdom (9:1–12).

[93] As long as the role of the adulteress in these four passages as is concerned, Fox indicates: "The *'iššah zarah*, 'the strange woman' who is the villain in four passages (2:16–22; 5:1–23; 6:20–35; 7:1–27), has been understood in six ways: (1) a foreign secular harlot, (2) a foreign devotee of a foreign god, (3) a foreign goddess, (4) a social outsider, (5) a native prostitute, and (6) another man's wife. In my view, the last identification alone is correct. She may also be motivated by money, but this is not clearly indicated." Fox, *Proverbs 1–9*, 134.

foreign philosophy, introduces an additional level of meaning and does not compete with these other explanations on the plain–sense level.[94]

Except for the passage in 2:16–22, which is a minor part and not the major concern (or major problem) in the second fatherly discourse (2:1–22), the other three passages of the adulteress (the strange woman) are neatly overlapped with the seventh, ninth and tenth fatherly discourses (5:1–23; 6:20–35; 7:1–27) and demonstrate a series of anti–wisdom side in a intensified manner (see Tables 4 and 7).[95] In other words, the father uses these anti–wisdom indicators to concentrate his warnings against evil so that his teachings concerning wisdom are more emphasized and cherished by the son. If these passages signaled by the anti–wisdom indicators are not discontinuities in their context, the passages with the wisdom indicators (especially the passages in Prov 8–9) are not either. A coherent content arrangement does exist among these passages and in Prov 1–9.

(2) Wisdom and Anti–Wisdom Side by Side

The contrasting patterns that are purposively placed *side by side* illustrate the consistency of the thought flow (content arrangement) in Prov 1–9. The contrasting patterns are rhetorically presented by the notions of wisdom and anti–wisdom, or precisely, Lady Wisdom and the adulteress (Dame Folly), the two anthropomorphic and contrasting roles. These two women represent two opposite situations of human life in Prov 1–9.[96]

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[94] Ibid. Camp also considers the adulteress (the strange woman) "a stereotype, a crystallized picture of the attractions and dangers of any and every sexually liminal woman; it does not portray a particular real person or class of persons." Camp, *Wisdom and the Feminine in the Book of Proverbs*, 116.

[95] See 72 and 80.

[96] The father's rhetoric purposefully presents Lady Wisdom and the adulteress/Dame Folly as the two opposite situations of human life. Lady Wisdom is the archetype of order (blessing, happiness, riches, long life, righteousness, knowledge, understanding and so on). The adulteress is the archetype of disorder. Camp explains: "She (the strange woman) is an archetype of disorder at all levels of existence. This poetic and

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As this study examined the rhetorical structure in Prov 1–9, the second half of the ten fatherly discourses is evil–focused (see Tables 4 and 7)[97] and its emphasis on evil intensifies until the climax of evil appears in Prov 7. Clifford recognizes this climax and notes:

> Chapter 7 is the tenth and final lecture in chaps. 1–9 and the fourth of five explicit warnings against the forbidden woman (the preceding four are 2:16–19, chap. 5, and 6:20–35). It serves as a foil to the speech of Woman Wisdom in chap. 8, for the first line of its peroration (7:24) is picked up by the first line of the peroration in chap. 8 (v.32). Chapter 2 introduced the deceptive woman in vv. 16–19 as one of the two external dangers to those searching for wisdom. Proverbs 5:1–23 and 6:20–35 elaborated the warning. Chapter 7 is the climax of these warnings.[98]

The climax is the result of the accumulation of the previous relevant messages, and the purpose of its existence is to serve as a foil to the positive side (Lady Wisdom). It is clear, therefore, that the thought flow hence continues uninterrupted from the fatherly discourses in Prov 1–7 into the wisdom poems in Prov 8–9.

As the contrastive pattern that is found in the text, the effect of undulation (wavelike/up–and–down) takes place to keep the reader/listener from the tedium caused by a long series of talks.

Thus there are two side–by–side contrasts in Prov 1–9. The larger contrast is between the first, wisdom–centered half of the fatherly discourses (1:8–4:19) and the second, anti–wisdom–focused half (4:20–7:27). The smaller contrast occurs when the adulteress (Prov 7) and Lady Wisdom (Prov 8) are placed side by side, making an impressive contrast. Newsom indicates: "Although very different in style and content,

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editorial layering of concerns and consequences has, then, shifted our vision of the strange from her stereotypical to her archetypical dimensions, i.e., from her characteristic patterns of behavior to the meanings and values she embodies *via negativa*." Ibid., 119.

[97] See 72 and 80.

[98] Clifford, *Proverbs*, 84.

these poems of the strange woman and of personified wisdom a diptych. Chapter 8, with its strong mythic overtones, is written largely in the symbolic register; chapter 7 largely in the realistic."[99] Discussing the side–by–side contrast between Prov 7 and 8, Waltek also points out:

> They are also linked formally by uniquely having concluding speeches resembling the introduction to the lectures (cf. 7:24–27; 8:32–36), both being addressed to "my sons." This pairing of the unfaithful wife with personified Wisdom prepares the way for the confrontation of personified Wisdom with the foolish woman in ch. 9. The unfaithful wife, however, may function as well as a symbolic representation of a seductive worldview foreign to true Israel, God's son.[100]

It is the father's rhetoric, the unifying rhetoric in Prov 1–9, that creates this content arrangement, placing wisdom and anti–wisdom side by side. The wisdom material in Prov 8 is not a discontinuity but an arrangement for the climax as well a contrast to the previous content in Prov 7. The balance formed by these contrasts produces symmetry for the entire rhetorical structure in Prov 1–9, creating coherence of content arrangement.

(3) Contrastive Ending

The previous contrastive rhetoric in Prov 7 and 8 moves into the final chapter of Prov 9, presenting the two contrasting women, Lady Wisdom (9:1–6) and Dame Folly (9:13–18), to achieve the final conclusion. The holistic design of the father's rhetoric becomes clear when the conclusion of entire Prov 1–9 ends by the two contrasting personified women, Lady Wisdom (9:1–6) and Dame Folly (9:13–18). This authorial or editorial arrangement of contrast intentionally highlights the father's final comment in the

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[99] Carol A. Newsom, "Woman and the Discourse of Patriarchal Wisdom: A Study of Proverbs 1–9," *Women in the Hebrew Bible: A Reader* (ed. Alice Bach; New York: Routledge Press, 1999), 95.

[100] Waltke, *The Book of Proverbs: Chapters 1–15*, 368; also cf. Waltke's discussion on "the unfaithful wife" in 124–5.

middle of the structure (9:7–12, see Tables 4, 12 and 13)[101] so that the listener may make

his own decision between good (Lady Wisdom) and evil (Dame Folly) according to the

speaker's advice. In order to continue the content arrangement of what follows Prov 1–9,

this contrasting effect "foreshadows antithetical parallels that characterize Proverbs 10–

15."[102]

Deliberate parallels are made between Lady Wisdom (9:1–6) and Dame Folly

(9:13–18) in many ways. Both have a third–person introduction. Both are

personifications, one of wisdom and one of seductive folly. But these parallels only serve

to underscore their differences—the contrast between faithful suggestions and skillful

seductions, blessings and curses, life and death.

Having seen the thought flow dominated by the two female figures until the final

chapter (chapter 9), R. E. Murphy asserts that

> Chap. 9 suggests a symbolic identification of Woman Stranger with Woman
> Folly (Dame Folly), and this figure is opposed to Wisdom (Lady Wisdom).
> The previous chapters *have prepared* the ground for this.[103]

According to Murphy's observation in the rhetoric of chapter 9, the consistency from the

beginning to the end becomes convincing in the entire block of Prov 1–9. In other words,

the father's rhetoric delicately designs the content arrangement with the intention of

antithetic figures and gives a strong emphasis at the ending.

The discussion in the contrastive perspective has presented the evidences of

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[101] See 72, 96, and 98.

[102] Ibid., 14. It is reasonable to suppose that the block of Prov 1–9 is designed for introducing the whole Book of Proverbs. The contrastive effect that is developed in the ten fatherly discourses (the first wisdom–centered half v.s. the second evil–focused half) now comes to a concluding end with a reminder, a contrast of Lady Wisdom and Dame Folly. The original author or editor plugs the block of Prov 10–15 in this kind of ending in Prov 9 so that the contrasting effect may continue in the antithetic pair of parallelism in Prov 10–15.

[103] Murphy, *Proverbs*, 280 (italics mine).

consistency/coherence in the content arrangement of Prov 1–9. Either the various

indicators or the contrastive pattern certifies that the father's rhetoric in Prov 1–7 does

continue and climax in Prov 8–9. It is unnecessary to consider the block of Prov 8–9

discontinuities. With the help of rhetorical analysis, the contrasting pattern that is

dominated by wisdom and anti–wisdom proves the consistency/coherence of the

arrangement in content.

The contrastive effect of undulation (wavelike/up–and–down) takes place to keep

the reader/listener from the tedium caused by a long series of talks. The side of anti–

wisdom that is represented by the figure of the strange woman or Dame Folly drives the

reading towards a feeling opposite to that Lady Wisdom provides. Consistency/coherence

is definitely maintained through the skill of personification in the operation of the father's

rhetoric.

Father's Comment Perspective

The content arrangement of Prov 8–9 moves in a different landscape (wisdom's

speeches) from that of the fatherly discourses. Yet this is not a discontinuity. The father's

comments in this block (8:1–3; 9:1–3, 7–12)[104] continue his earlier rhetoric and create

coherence in the whole passage of Prov 1–9.

The short introductions of personified Wisdom are *direct* fatherly comments (8:1–3;

9:1–3) which form a bridge between the fatherly discourses in Prov 1–7 and the wisdom

speeches in Prov 8–9. In terms of the structure in Prov 1–9, the content arrangement

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[104] This section concentrates on the three pieces of the father's comments, that is, two of the father's introductions in 8:1–3 and 9: 1–3 and the father's final comment in 9:7–12. Except for the passage about introducing Dame Folly (9:13–15), this study chooses the three statements because they are useful in explaining how the shift of the content arrangement take place in Prov 1–9 and how the father's rhetoric in Prov 1–7 works out coherence in the block of Prov 8–9.

moves in a different landscape (the wisdom's speeches) in Prov 8 after the ending of fatherly discourses (the ending of chapter 7). Lady Wisdom appears as the *third* person (8:1–3; 9:1–3) *introduced* by the father and starts to speak. The shift in speaker (the father→Lady Wisdom) brings in a rhetorical effect of *illustration* that is a substantiation of what is said in the fatherly discourses. In this case, Lady Wisdom that emerges onto the stage as a metaphorical figure addresses the same listener of the fatherly discourses (the son of the speaker). Therefore the thought flow is not interrupted because the father's rhetoric still continues its force through these father's comments in the block of Prov 8–9.

The other piece of the father's comment is the father's final statement *indirectly* introduced by Lady Wisdom (9:7–12), marking the conclusive ending of Prov 1–9. Both are explored below. While providing the conclusion, the father still keeps Lady Wisdom speaking so that his rhetoric continues its coherence. The role of speaker (Lady Wisdom) marks the purpose of Prov 1–9, namely (obtaining) wisdom itself. The arrangement of content thus becomes consistent from the beginning of the introduction (9:1–3) to the conclusion of the middle part (9:7–12).

(1) Father's Introduction in Proverbs 8:1–3

The father's introduction to personified Wisdom in Prov 8:1–3 bridges the block of Prov 1–7 and the section of Prov 8, making the father's rhetoric continue into the wisdom poem (8:1–36). The translation of this passage is as follows:

v. 1 Does–not–wisdom call–out,[105]

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[105] The strophe starts with a rhetorical question by הֲלֹא. Indeed Lady Wisdom has done the calling before (1:22a; and 1:22–33), so the listener should pay attention once again. Lady Wisdom has to appear on the stage this way so that she may increase the sense of urgency that the evil adulteress has brought with her in the previous chapter (Prov 7:1–27). LXX's translation, "σὺ τὴν σοφίαν κηρύξεις ἵνα φρόνησίς σοι ὑπακούσῃ" ("You shall proclaim wisdom") might come from a different version of the Hebrew Bible.

And–understanding utters her–voice?[106]

v. 2 On–the–top–of–heights, beside–the–way,[107]

the–place of–roads, she–stations–herself.[108]

v. 3 Beside–the–gates, at–the–opening–of–the–town,[109]

at–the–entrance of–the–doorways, she–cries–aloud.[110]

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[106] The תְּבוּנָה ("understanding") here is parallel to חָכְמָה ("wisdom") both in gender and number. It occurs seven times in Prov 2:2, 3, 6, 11; 3:13, 18; 8:1. The other similar form בִּינָה ("understanding") is found in Prov 1–9 (Prov 1:2; 2:3; 4:1, 5, 7; 7:4 ; 8:14; 9:6, 10, a total of nine times). It sounds as if the father's rhetoric does not make a distinction in using these two words in both Prov 1–7 and 8–9. Along with wisdom, understanding also utters her voice so that stylistic switch (wisdom → understanding) is not to create a new figure but to make a word pair of metaphors.

[107] The word מְרוֹמִים ("heights or high places," masculine/plural) means some high location for religious purpose (service or sacrifice). בְּרֹאשׁ the combination of the proposition בְּ and רֹאשׁ ("head or top," masculine/singular) used to mean "on the top." The other similar phrase בְּרֵאשִׁית (feminine/singular) that happens in the first verse of book of Genesis is translated into "in the beginning." This בְּרֹאשׁ, more or less implies that בְּרֵאשִׁית ("on the top") in its creational context (cf. 8:22–31 and also 3:19–20). The creational relevance that is located in Prov 1–7 and 8–9 is one of the evidences that those nine chapters should be read together.

[108] The word נְתִיבוֹת is "paths" or "roads" in its regular meaning and בֵּית (masculine/sing/con) is usually translated into "house," "palace" or "temple" in the Old Testament. Here בֵּית could be just a "place" (TDOT, 0241). Therefore, "the place of roads" probably is like "crossroads" in modern sense (RSV and NRS translate it this way). In its metaphorical implication, it might mean that, as long as there is a road (namely in all roads), the wisdom will be found. The word נִצָּבָה ("to station") comes from נצב ("to stand"). The niphal form is used as reflective, meaning to station herself. Indeed the metaphorical wisdom takes her stand "on the top of heights" (religious life), "beside the way" (commercial or regular life), in "the place of all roads" (everywhere). The view of the landscape is gradually enlarged rhetorically. That is, in any place wisdom will be there for the willing people who listen to her call.

[109] The phrase לְיַד־שְׁעָרִים is translated into "beside the gates." The phrase לְיַד only occurs for eight times in the Hebrew Bible (1 Sam 19:3; 1 Chr 18:17, 23:28; Neh 11:24; Ps 140:5; Prov 8:3; 11:21; 16:5). The phrase in these places, Prov 8:3, Ps 140:5, and 1Sam 19:3, can mean location ("beside") while all of the rest involve either relationship (1Chro. 18:17, 23:28; Nehe. 11:24) or intensification (Prov 11:21; 16:5, יד ליד = hand with hand or hand upon hand). The place beside the gate used to function as place of assembly (e.g. Ruth 4:1–12). Esteemed elders were there for solving problems. Wisdom is just what people need for conflicts or trouble. The other phrase לְפִי־קָרֶת parallel to לְיַד־שְׁעָרִים in form and meaning (ל // פֶּה; פֶּה ["mouth"] // יד ["hand"], קֶרֶת ["town"]// שְׁעָרִים ["gates"]), also means by "at the opening of town (or city)." The word לְפִי one of the metaphorical ways to express location or relationship in Hebrew, means also the entrance.

[110] The phrase מְבוֹא פְתָחִים "the entrance of doorways," is the last of the triple set. The father's rhetoric uses a triple phrase (besides gates=at the opening of town=at the entrance of the doorways) to express the same matter. The phrase is set here without a preposition as the previous two, probably functioning as a coordinate (A, namely B). That is, "the opening of the town" is equal to "the entrance of the doorways" grammatically. The verb תָּרֹנָּה ("cry aloud") that has the root רנן means "give a ringing cry" or "cry aloud" This imperfect verb is better rendered as present tense, so as the perfect niphal נִצָּבָה in the previous verse (v. 2). The translation should use the present tense in that the wisdom's expression is about

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This translation shows that Lady Wisdom is introduced in the third person. Since she is not the speaker, it is reasonable to question the identity of the speaker. Based on the context, the father who speaks the ten fatherly discourses is the most likely speaker. Longman supports this idea.

> The passage (chap. 8) begins with a third–person voice that introduces Woman Wisdom (vv. 1–3). In the context of the book, we should probably understand the narrator to be the sage, *the father*, who has been speaking throughout the book, though this identification is not crucial for our understanding of the text. He calls attention to the Woman's speech and provides some interesting geographical locators that have significance for our understanding of the metaphor.[111]

The importance of the three verses consists in their connection with the previous chapters. First, the rhetorical question in v. 1 (Does not Wisdom call out, and understanding utter her voice?), as well as the setting (on the top of heights, beside the way, beside the gates, at the opening of the town, at the entrance of a doorway) provides an echo to the similar setting in the section of Prov 1:20–33, the supporting interlude in the first half of the ten fatherly discourses (See Tables 4 and 5).[112] Second, the multiple callers (Wisdom and Understanding in v. 1) means that there must be some other rhetoric

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perennial truth. There is also some textual problems involved with what the wisdom really does there. Some Syrian manuscripts, Targum, and LXX use an entirely different word, "ὑμνεῖται" ("singing"). The same happened to Prov 1:20 with the same verb in the same manuscripts. It is hard to tell which is more appropriate in that both readings (crying out and singing) seem suitable to the context. It is certain that there should be some connection between Prov 8 and 1:20–33.

[111] Longman, *Proverbs*, 197 (italics mine). In his commentary on Prov 8:1–3 Longman give his further explanation: "In the first verses of the chapter, we hear a voice talking about wisdom in a manner soon making it obvious that this abstract concept is personified; thus we capitalize the English translation. The voice that speaks about wisdom is never identified, but perhaps there is an implicit identification with the father/sage whose presence dominates the first nine chapters as he speaks to the son." Ibid., 198. Longman is insightfully correct in considering the father the speaker of Prov 8:1–3. but his opinion is not even close to the truth when he indicates, "this identification is not crucial for our understanding of the text" The truth is that this identification of the father uses the same rhetorical strategy again and again. For the first time, he uses the similar introduction for personified Wisdom in Prov 1:20–21; then he introduces the same figure in 8:1–3, and also again in 9:1–3. At last, he introduces Dame Folly in 9:13–15.

[112] See Table 4 in 72, and Table 5 in 73 and the relevant discussion in 73–9.

(the father's) controlling the introduction and the following speech.[113] Third, the three

verses ask the listener for the attitude of obedience which is shown in the exordium of the

father's comment (8:4–6) as well as in most of the exordia in the fatherly discourses (e.g.,

1:8; 2:1–2; 3:1, 21; 4:1, 10, 20–21; 5:1; 6:20–21; 7:1–3).[114] This evidence demonstrates

that the rhetoric in Prov 8 continues from Prov 1–7; the connecting role of these three

verses is designed intentionally.

Above all, the father's comment in these verses functions as a linkage connecting

the direct (Prov 1–7) and indirect (Prov 8 and also Prov 9) discourses of the same father.

The shift of speaker allows a different treatment of the subject, so that the message

conveyed to the listener becomes more persuasive. The adjustment of the content

arrangement (the father→Lady Wisdom) targets the formation of the climax for Prov 1–

9. Being aware of this rhetorical strategy in the father's comment/introduction, the

father's rhetoric in Prov 1–7 continues and climaxes in Prov 8–9.

(2) Father's Introduction in Proverbs 9:1–3

The passage of Prov 9:1–3, the other piece of the father's introduction, continues

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[113] The word תְּבוּנָה ("understanding") which is parallel to חָכְמָה ("wisdom") in v. 1 is identified to be חָכְמָה in v. 14 (Wisdom says: I am Understanding). In the other words, wisdom is not only one that is personified, or wisdom possesses more than one identification. The metaphorical skill (both Wisdom and Understanding are metaphorical figures) implies some other rhetoric (the father's rhetoric) manipulating the content arrangement, and intensify the rhetorical effect upon the listener (the double figure means the same thing).

[114] The listener(s) whom Lady Wisdom calls out for (8:1a) occurs as the vocative בָּנִים ("sons") in 8:32a, which also appears in the fatherly discourses (4:1a; 5:7a; 7:24a). In particular, the exact phrase "לִי וְעַתָּה בָנִים שִׁמְעוּ" ("And now, oh sons, listen to me") is used in the Lady Wisdom's lips (8:32a) as well as in the father's mouth (5:7a; 7:24a). Again, this is not a coincidence but a special content arrangement to maintain coherence in the text. In the other words, the father wants his rhetoric developed in Prov 1–7 and recognized in Prov 8–9. This shows the rhetoric of coherence exist both in Prov 8 and Prov 1–7 according to an integral perspective of the content arrangement. What Lady Wisdom wants from her listener(s) is only listening (שִׁמְעוּ ["listen"]). This *shema* reminding definitely brings up the other *shema* (8:32) at the ending of Prov 8, making the effect of the climax in Prov 8 more impressive.

the previous rhetoric (8:1–3 and also entire Prov 8) and serves as a prelude to the

peroration of Prov 9. If the passage of 8:1–3 is designed for the climax in Prov 8, the

passage of 9:1–3 siginals the specific conclusion in Prov 9 in regards to the rhetorical

structure of Prov 1–9 (See Tables 4 and 12).[115] Here is the translation of the passage of

Prov 9:1–3:

> v. 1 Wisdom has–built her–house,[116]
>
> she has–hewn her–pillars the–seven–ones.[117]
>
> v. 2 She–has–slaughtered her–slaughtering, she–has–mixed her–wine,[118]

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[115] See Table 4 in 72 and Table 12 in 96.

[116] Here is the same Wisdom as 8:1 (חָכְמָה [wisdom], singular) but different in form (חָכְמוֹת [wisdom], plural). This should be a rhetorical and intentional switch (to match the ones in Prov 1:20 and 3:13). The switch intends not to create a different Wisdom but rather to show the rhetorical manipulation of the father (the father's rhetoric). Instead of the rhetorical question in Prov 8:1, the Lady Wisdom stands on the stage as an artisan (cf. אָמוֹן in 8:30), and "has built her house" (בָּנְתָה בֵיתָהּ). There is not an urgent need for her to call back the lost young man, allured by the adulteress in Prov 7:1–27, so the start of the re–introduction or re–recommendation for Lady Wisdom is soft and attractive. The nuance of house (בַּיִת) in Prov 1–9 is by a large negative in meaning. For instances, the house of wickedness (3:33), the house of the strange or foreign woman (5:8, 10), the house of the evil adutleress (7:8, 27) and the house of Dame Folly (9:14) all will lead the victim to a destructive outcome. Only to stay in the father's house (7:6), where the father took a peek at how the adulteress allures the victim, and in the house that Lady Wisdom built (9:1) is safe enough. There are some interesting imagery connections between the father's and Lady Wisdom's houses.

[117] The second cola of v. 1, חָצְבָה עַמּוּדֶיהָ שִׁבְעָה ("she has hewn her pillars the seven ones"), the first of the following triple phrases, is associated with the first cola in a parallelism (has built//has hewn, her house//her seven pillars), and the second cola supplements the first one with some more details (seven pillars – splendid/luxuriant). RSV follows LXX as well as some Syrian manuscripts and translates this cola as "she has set up her seven pillars" because LXX uses ὑπήρεισεν for חָצְבָה ("has hewn"). The Greek ὑπήρεισεν means to "put something under as a support," which seems quite different from the Hebrew חצבה (hew or hew out). Maybe LXX wants to interpret the reason why the seven hewn pillars are necessary for her house, that is, to set them up as a support or foundation. The number seven implies perfection in the Hebrew Bible so the whole building of the Lady Wisdom is more gorgeous than any other in the human world.

[118] The clause "She has slaughtered her slaughtering" (טָבְחָה טִבְחָהּ) uses the verb and noun of the same root טבח in order to intensify the well–prepared meat. LXX's translation ἔσφαξεν τὰ ἑαυτῆς θύματα (she has slaughtered her sacrifice) might convey a religious offering (θύματα). Here the Lady Wisdom is hostess to her listener by preparing wonderful meats while in Prov 7, one young man became the slaughtered meat (טבח) under the hand of the evil adulteress (Prov 7:22). The rhetorical contrast is one of the evidences of the father's rhetoric that relates Prov 7:1–27 (the tenth fatherly discourse) and Prov 9:1–6 (the wisdom poem). The phrase מָסְכָה יֵינָהּ ("she has mixed her wine") supplements the banquet with well–tasted drink (a mixed wine). LXX add one more phrase, εἰς κρατῆρα ("in a bowl"), in its translation but it does not exist in the Hebrew text. The wine drinking image also appears in Prov 4:17, where the drink of the wicked is the wine of violence. There is the water–drinking metaphor in Prov 5:15–18, in which one's

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indeed she–has–prepared her–table.[119]

v. 3 She–has–sent–out her–maids, she calls[120]

on–the–highest of–heights of–the–city.[121]

This passage shows that Lady Wisdom is introduced in the third person by the father while she works as an artisan and a cook. After everything is ready, she sends out messengers with invitations and starts to give her speech (9:4–6). Several different images are compacted in these six cola. All of the rhetorical arrangements form an intentional contrast to the other figure Dame Folly (9:13–18) so that the father's final comment becomes the conclusion in the middle of Prov 9 (9:7–12). The three–verse passage contributes greatly to the coherence connecting Prov 9 to Prov 1–8.

First, the father who introduces Lady Wisdom in Prov 8:1–3 continues the same rhetoric in Prov 9:1–3 but he changes his strategy. This time, Lady Wisdom appears in a

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wife is likened to one's own cistern. One's own water should not be dispersed abroad for the strange woman (v. 18). "Stolen water is sweet," says the Dame Folly (Prov 9:17) to allure the listener. All those drinking metaphors are related as rhetorical contrasts.

[119] "Truly she has set her table" (אַף עָרְכָה שֻׁלְחָנָהּ), the last and concluding triple phrase leads to a clarity of what is going on. The beasts–slaughtering and wine–mixing are for the banquet table, so the table provides the reason of the previous actions. These three phrases form a neat triple pair (verb + noun) and all have a *qametz* in the ending syllable. The particle conjunction אַף reinforces the nature of the triple phrases in the last one.

[120] The phrase שָׁלְחָה נַעֲרֹתֶיהָ ("she has sent out her maids") demonstrates that Lady Wisdom not only calls to extend an invitation but also sends her maids to invite. The perfect verb שָׁלְחָה ("she has sent out") seems to convey a sense of mission and the object noun נַעֲרֹתֶיהָ (maids, female/plural) is related more or less to the major listener of the fatherly discourse (my son) because this son is described as a lad (נער, masculine/singular) in Prov 1:4. May this נער after he becomes wise be described as the female maid of Lady Wisdom in order to invite others? The rhetoric may lead to that connection. The imperfect verb תִקְרָא ("she calls") intends to bring out some rhetorical switch (perfect → imperfect). In Prov 9:1–3a the Lady Wisdom has prepared everything (with perfect verbs), then she comes back with the customary formula: calling (תקרא, imperfect verb). The calling formula can be also found in Prov 1:20 and 8:1, the beginning parts of those wisdom talks.

[121] The phrase עַל־גַּפֵּי מְרֹמֵי קָרֶת ("on the highest places in the town") is sort of a high–place repetition of Prov 8:2–3 and 1:21. Both the word גַּפֵּי (גַּף, masculine/plural/constructive) that can be height or elevation and מְרֹמֵי (מְרוֹם) that also means heights are the double constructive to the absolute קָרֶת. So the highest place among heights can be translated simply into the highest of heights. Again, the highest places are where voices can best be heard and probably also the location of the religious places (shrines).

different form (feminine plural). The rhetorical switch from singular to plural turns the

attention of listener from the high/deep perspective of wisdom to the reality of earthly

life.[122]

Second, the father's introduction helps to present Prov 9 in its role as the conclusion

of Prov 1–9.[123] Third, the action implied in the father's comment is that of making a

choice.[124] Lady Wisdom encourages the commitment of action by intensively using *seven*

volitional verbs in three verses (9:4–6).[125] Fourth, the implied listener in the father's

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[122] A similar switch is also found between Prov 1:20–33 and 3:13–20. The message of Prov 1:20–33 in which the *plural* form of personified Wisdom appears for the first time is inclined to worldly life and human decision. However, the form of personified Wisdom is switched into the *singular* when a deep/high perspective of wisdom is introduced in the passage of Prov 3:13–20. If the figures of various forms do mean the same objective (e.g., personified Wisdom) according to the context, the implied speaker must be some one other than these objectives. Otherwise, we should have two Lady Wisdoms as speakers, and that will make the whole thing more complicated to understand. Indeed there is not any role better than the speaking father that is appropriate to do speaking. That is, the speaking father addresses the same listener from his own hidden role behind personified Wisdom, and in an indirect way, he uses his rhetoric of persuasion to encourage his son to make a better choice (9:7–12) between wisdom (9:1–6) and folly (9:13–18). This change is not to confuse the listener but to remind him of something important. Not as urgent as the former wisdom speech (Prov 8) that demands a quick response to the evil adulteress' action in Prov 7:1–27, the father's rhetoric utilizes Lady Wisdom to give an invitation of persuasion (Prov 9:4–6). Again, Lady Wisdom is first introduced in the third person (9:1–3, cf. 8:1–3) and then gives her speech (9:4–6) as she just did in the previous section (8:4ff.) The similar introduction in both chapters 8 and 9 testify to the continuity in these two passages and the continuity with Prov 1–7.

[123] Instead of a rhetorical question (8:1), the father uses the images of construction (v. 1) and feast (v. 2) to portray the setting of Lady Wisdom. The construction of the seven–pillar house is the way that Lady Wisdom demonstrates her own magnificent value (cf. 3:19–20; 8:22–31). The generous feast relates to human participation, in particular the participation of the listener. The rhetorical setting makes Lady Wisdom a clear contrast to Dame Folly. When Lady Wisdom invites the listener into a magnificent "dinning hall" for a "well–prepared supper," Dame Folly is still clamorous and knows "nothing" (9:13). The two personified women that represent the two opposite sides in Prov 1–9, namely good and evil, are here for a final summary in the conclusion (Prov 9) of Prov 1–9.

[124] Unlike the wisdom sayings of chapter 8 that focus on the transcendence and origin of wisdom, personified Wisdom of Prov 9:1–6 is more related to choice and the consequence of humanity. Indeed the choice–making advice will not appear till the father's final comment in the middle of Prov 9 (9:7–12) but here in the father's introduction, the invitation of choice–making is strongly implied by Lady Wisdom's action (sending out her maid, v. 3a) and her own calling (v. 3b). The encouragement of choice making is the major intention in Prov 9 as well as in Prov 1–7.

[125] In 9:4–6, the seven volitional verbs are intensively used as follows: יָסֻר ("let him turn" [jussive], v. 4a), לְכוּ ("come" [imperative], v. 5a), לַחֲמוּ ("eat" [imperative], v. 5a), שְׁתוּ ("drink" [imperative], v. 5b), עִזְבוּ ("forsake" [imperative], v. 6a), חְיוּ ("live" [imperative], v. 6a) and אִשְׁרוּ ("go straight" [imperative], v. 6b). Although some of the verbs are metaphorical (e.g., eat and drink), all of these verbs ask for a commitment of action. Volitional verbs are seldom used intensively as such in the Book of Proverbs. The rhetorical strategy increases the force of persuasion by the intensification.

introduction is the same listener in Prov 1–8.[126]

Thus this study demonstrates that the father's introduction in Prov 9:1–3 functions like a stage manager. It not only links Prov 9 to the block of Prov 1–8 but also makes possible the conclusion of Prov 1–9. As far as rhetorical strategy is concerned, it tightly combines Prov 8 and 9 through wisdom's personification, making the places of the climax and conclusion in Prov 1–9 all the clearer.

(3) Father's Final Comment in Proverbs 9:7–12

The father's final comment (Prov 9:7–12) in the mouth of Lady Wisdom that occurs between Lady Wisdom (9:1–6) and Dame Folly (9:13–18) produces the conclusion of Prov 1–9. The function of this comment is to give the listener advice to make choice between good (Lady Wisdom) and evil (Dame Folly).[127] Instead of treating this passage as a discontinuity,[128] Waltke considers the passage's thematic and stylistic connection in

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[126]According the following speech of Lady Wisdom (9:4–6), the characters of the listener is simple (פְּתָאִים/פֶּתִי) (9:4a, 6a cf. 9:16a) and lacking mind/sense (חֲסַר־לֵב) (9:4b). The same listener in the fatherly discourses is also simple (פְּתָאִים) (1:4a; 7:7a; cf. 1:22a, 32a; 8:5a and also cf. 14:15a, 18a; 19:25a; 21:11a; 22:3b; 27:12b) and lacking mind/sense (חֲסַר־לֵב) (6:32a; 7:7b; cf. 10:13b; 11:12a; 12:11b; 17:18a; 24:30b). As Longman observes, "Both Woman Wisdom and Woman Folly issue invitations to the reader, who is supposed to identify with the son. With whom will the son/reader dine, Wisdom or Folly? Dining with a woman implies an intimate relationship, so we might ask more pointedly: Will Wisdom or Folly become an integral part of life? . . . Again, the reader/son must make a choice, and this choice is fundamental for the exercise of wisdom." Longman, *Proverbs*, 222.

[127] As Steinmann indicates, "What, then, is the purpose of 9:7–12 and its placement between the banquets of Wisdom and Foolishness? These are the words of Wisdom that allow the gullible person to learn and make an informed choice to be wise and not foolish, to choose between Wisdom and Foolishness, the two women of Proverbs 9." Steinman, *Proverbs*, 207.

[128] Fox treats this passage a discontinuity and indicates: "The later scribe who inserted these verses apparently doubted that the 'callow' and 'senseless' are the right recipients of the invitation to wisdom, and so introduced a caveat." Fox, *Proverbs 1–9*, 306. Fox also indicates: "This passage is undoubtedly an addition. It interrupt Wisdom's speech and is inappropriately interposed between the injunction in v 6 and natural sequel in v 11, which give the reason (introduced by causal *ki*) for the injunction. . . . The passage does not echo the vocabulary of the preceding section and does not confront Wisdom's invitation directly; it speaks instead to the issue of effective chastisement. It appears, then, that the present passage originated as an *independent* epigram and was subsequently inserted as a response to Wisdom's summons of the ignorant." (italic mine) Ibid.

its context and provides this structure:

Table 16. Composition in Proverbs 9:7–12[129]

I.	The consequences to the sage for correcting the proud rather than the wise	9:7–9
II.	Janus: the beginning and gain of wisdom	9:10
III.	The consequences to oneself of being wise or mocker	9:11–12

The passage of the father's comment is definitely a piece of continuity in its context, functioning as the conclusion of Prov 1–9 (See Tables 4, 12 and 13).[130] Indeed, the conclusion through the mouth of Wisdom asks for a choice. The father's comment here provides the statement that references the two kinds of women (moral and immoral) in chapters 5–9, represented here by Lady Wisdom and Dame Folly in Prov 9. The content arrangement creates the rhetorical effect of illustration and provides the *conclusio* for all of Prov 1–9. Placed in the center of Wisdom's conclusion (the fatherly final comment) is the phrase "the fear of Yahweh;" therefore, the fatherly *conclusio* urges the listener to choose a Yahwistic faith because "the fear of Yahweh is the beginning of *wisdom* and the knowledge of the Holy One is *understanding*" (Prov 9:10).[131] This

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[129] Waltke, *The Book of Proverbs: Chapters 1–15*, 439. According to this composition, "Verses 7–9 contrast the opposing responses of the mocker and the wise with the corresponding negative and positive effects that their responses have on the wisdom teacher, namely, rejection and shame over against acceptance and love. This notion suits the invitation to those potentially educable in vv. 1–6, for they contain a veiled admonition to invite those capable of becoming wise as well as a veiled warning not to invite the mocker. The invitation entails a rebuke: 'abandon the gullible.' Mockers by disposition cannot accept such an implicit rebuke. Verses 11–12 contrast the personal gain of being wise with the great loss of being a mocker. Verse 10, which forms an *inclusio* with 1:7, functions as janus verse. Looking back to vv. 7–9, v. 10a states that the essential foundation of being educable or wise is 'fear of the LORD,' and looking ahead, v. 10b names 'insight' from knowing the Holy One as the essential foundation for wisdom's benefits (vv. 11–12a). By placing the positive benefits of wisdom first (v. 11) and the negative consequences of mocking last (v. 12), the poet not only forms a chiastic *inclusio* with first strophe (proud–wise [vv. 7–9] versus wise–proud [v. 12]) but also offers a good transition to Folly's invitation in vv. 13–18. The wise belong to the guests hosted by Wisdom and the proud to the adherent of Folly." Ibid. See also the relevant discussion in Plöger, *Sprüche Salomos*, 105–6; Kidner, *The Proberbs*, 82.

[130] See Table 4 in 72, Table 12 in 96, and Table 13 in 98.

[131] This strophe is the center of the *conclusio* in place and meaning. The word חָכְמָה ("wisdom," v.

Yahwistic piety brings back the key tone of all of Prov 1–9, further evidence of the consistency of the thought flow.

To sum up, these three pericopes of the father's comment that function either as an introducing agent (8:1–3 and 9:1–3) or as a conclusive statement (9:7–12) are set to build the consistency/continuity of the content arrangement, making the father's rhetoric of Prov 1–7 continue and climax in Prov 8–9. Their rhetorical intention connects and strengthens what is said in the previous fatherly discourses so that the entire block of Prov 1–9 is a whole. The father's rhetoric in Prov 1–7 therefore proves its own existence and continuity in the wisdom materials (chapters 8–9) that are usually considered to be the discontinuities from the main body of Prov 1–9.

Summary

Thus this investigation demonstrates that Prov 1–7 has continuity with the block of Prov 8–9 because the three perspectives of the father's rhetoric (the progressive perspective, the contrastive perspective, and the father's comment perspective) support its existence.

Although the redactional critics (e.g., McKane, Whybray and Fox) treat the block of Prov 8–9 as the discontinuities in the text, they don't consider seriously the orality of Prov 1–9. As Lessing points out:

> The judgment that editors and intertextual scribes are responsible for the
> phenomena of discontinuity should be withheld. Rather, discontinuity may
> reflect oral performance of the text. Too often redaction critics take

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10a) is not the same with the the beginning one (חָכְמוֹת ["wisdom"], v. 1), and is introduced in the third person, and also understanding (בִּינָה, cf. Prov 8:1). Both personified Wisdom and understanding (8:1) are treated as third persons and the treatment continues in Prov 9:10 in operation of the father's rhetoric. Besides, both wisdom and the understanding are the same calling figures in 8:1. The rhetorical phrase not only brings in the integrity of chapters 8–9 but also the whole of chapters 1–9 by echoing 1:2 (wisdom and understanding). See also the discussion of the central place of this rhetorical phrase (the fear of Yahweh) in Steinman, *Proverbs*, 205–7.

discontinuity to reflect developments of later redactors. These conclusions must be questioned in light of the possibilities opened up by studies of orality.[132]

The concept of orality reflects the nature of the poetic discourses in Prov 1–9, demonstrating the wisdom lessons from easy–to–learn to hard–to–learn modes (the progressive perspective), the developmental tendency of wisdom and anti–wisdom (the contrastive perspective), and the rhetorical functions of the father's comments (the father's comment perspective). This viewpoint of consistency/continuity has to be studied and considered as one piece of evidence for the unity in Prov 1–9. When the continuity is appropriately recognized and analyzed, it is clear that the father's rhetoric in Prov 1–7 continues and climaxes in Prov 8–9, and thus Prov 1–9 forms a whole.

Chapter Summary

The study of Prov 1–9 in the compositional dimension shows both unity of structure and continuity through content arrangement. The structure of Prov 1–9 forms a whole in the light of rhetorical analysis. Its unity is clear if the climax in Prov 8 and the conclusion in Prov 9 are recognized. As this study has investigated, the first half of the entire rhetorical structure in Prov 1–9 shows a concentric and wisdom–centered structure from the first through fifth fatherly discourses (1:8–4:19), which prepares for the coming climax of wisdom instruction in Prov 8–9. The second half of the structure (sixth–tenth fatherly discourses, 4:20–7:27) deals with the three levels of the warning against the adulteress, the personification of anti–wisdom, leading to a climax of the father's rhetoric in chapter 8. After the climax, the conclusion of chapter 9 is provided by the choice between good and evil (Lady Wisdom and Dame Folly).

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[132] Lessing, *Interpreting Discontinuity*, 258.

Along with structure, the content arrangement of the father's rhetoric demonstrates its consistency/continuity in Prov 1–9. It does so through the progressive perspective (wisdom lessons from easy–to–learn to hard–to–learn mode), the contrastive perspective (wisdom v.s. anti–wisdom) and the father's comment perspective (the father's comments functioning as bridges and conclusion). The apparent discontinuities in Prov 1–9, especially the ones in Prov 8–9, become explicable and reasonable in the light of these rhetorical perspectives. The block of Prov 1–7 appears inconsistent without Prov 8–9; and the block of Prov 8–9 loses its significance and becomes meaningless without the preparation of Prov 1–7.

Important as the compositional dimension is, the persuasive dimension examined in the next chapter will add yet more evidence to show that the father's rhetoric continues from Prov 1–7 into chapters 8 and 9, climaxing there and bringing unity to the whole of Prov 1–9.

CHAPTER SIX

PERSUASIVE DIMENSION: STYLISTIC ELEMENTS, ETHOS, PATHOS, AND IMAGERY DEVICES IN THE FATHER'S RHETORIC

Investigation into the compositional dimension has shown the unity of the structure

and content arrangement of the present text of Prov 1–9, supplied by the father's rhetoric.

This chapter focuses on the persuasive dimension of Prov 1–9, particularly stylistic

elements, ethos, pathos, and imagery devices.

Trible defines rhetoric as the art of persuasion, pointing out: "Beginning with

Aristotle, it has prevailed throughout the centuries. How a speaker or writer shapes

discourse to affect an audience sets the interest."[1] Investigating this question *of how*, this

study therefore goes deeper into examining how the father, who is the chief speaker, uses

his rhetoric of persuasion to achieve his educational purpose for the son, who is the

listener. "Persuasion involves choice and will."[2] "The art of rhetoric is the art of choice."[3]

This chapter presents evidence to show both the choice and the will of speaker and the

listener.

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[1] Trible, *Rhetorical Criticism*, 41. In the biblical study, Trible defines rhetoric as "the art of composition" and "the art of persuasion." James Muilenburg initiates the study in the art of composition; and Yehoshua Gitay becomes the representative for the study of the art of persuasion. See the relevant discussion in ibid., 25–52. Also see Gitay's major works in Gitay, *Prophecy and Persuasion*; *Isaiah and His Audience*; "A Study of Amos's Art of Speech: A Rhetorical Analysis of Amos 3:1–15," 293–309; "Reflections on the Study of the Prophetic Discourse: The Question of Isaiah 1:2–20," 207–21; "Rhetorical Criticism," 135–49; "Psalm 1 and the Rhetoric of Religious Argumentation."

[2] Gitay, *Prophecy and Persuasion*, 35.

[3] Ibid., 36. Gitay also explains this idea by saying, "That is to say, the author or orator has to choose his arguments, the way in which they will be organized, and he also has to choose his words and the proper means of expression. Thus, all literary research which calls attention to the principles of selection used to appeal to the audience (or the reader) is a rhetorical study." Ibid.

The chapter is divided into four major sections, that is, stylistic elements, ethos, pathos, and imagery devices. The study of stylistic elements examines linguistic evidence for consistency between Prov 1–7 and 8–9. The discussions of ethos (speaker's ethos) and pathos (listener's pathos) demonstrate the interaction between speaker and listener which is developed to achieve the unity and continuity in Prov 1–9. The issue of imagery devices focuses on the discussion of *how* the metaphorical language (e.g., personified Wisdom) functions and communicates.

Stylistic Elements in the Father's Rhetoric

Stylistic elements are part of the evidence which demonstrates the performance of the father's rhetoric from Prov 1–7 into Prov 8–9, where it climaxes. In particular, this investigation will examine volitional verbs, adverbial clauses, lines, parallelisms, and sound. Under either an editorial or authorial control, these stylistic elements are very consistent in frequency between Prov 1–7 and Prov 8–9.

Volitional Verbs

The father's rhetoric uses volitional verbs consistently throughout Prov 1–9. Why focus on volitional verbs but not some other feature of the verbal system in Prov 1–9? It is because volitional verbs are one of the best examples to illustrate the interaction between speaker and listener in rhetoric. In Hebrew volitional conjugations, verbs are jussive (3rd person), imperative (2nd person), and cohortative (1st person). As Walker–Jones points out,

> The term volitional is from the Latin verb "to wish." Speakers using these conjugations attempt to impose their will on someone or something. . . . In Hebrew, these conjugations may be used for commands, and also advice, permission, requests, wishes, and so on. In other words, the degree to which the speaker exerts his or her will varies. Often the social status of the speaker

relative to the hearer determines whether these forms are used as commands or requests.[4]

Volitional verbs are used, for the most part, to express commands, advice, requests and wishes when the father addresses the son (Prov 1–7) or when Lady Wisdom speaks to her audience (Prov 8–9). Take the שׁמע ("to listen/hear") for example. The first volitional/jussive verb יִשְׁמַע ("let him listen") of Prov 1–9 which appears in 1:5a, and breaks the infinitive sequence in the prologue (1:2–6),[5] is rhetorically set for providing the nature of Prov 1–9, and also is pedagogical and oral.[6] In fact, the verb שׁמע ("to listen/ hear") is extremely important in indicating the oral nature of discourse and the

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[4] Arthur Walker–Jones, *Hebrew for Biblical Interpretation* (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2003), 152. Waltke and O'Connor also indicate: "Because the jussive (chiefly third person), imperative (second person), and cohortative (first person) forms do not overlap extensively in their uses, the three forms together comprise one unified system for the expression of the speaker's will. The once separate forms now work together to form a volitional class." Bruce K. Waltke and M. O'Connor, *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax* (Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 1990), 564–565. According to his observation to the wisdom admonition of Prov 1–9, Philip Johannes Nel considers the importance of the volitional verbs and says that "the admonition consists of an admonitory element, in the grammatical form of an imperative, jussive, vetitive or prohibitive and motivative element, which might vary in grammatical form, length and explication. The introductory particles of the motivative clauses vary and cannot necessarily be connected to the positive or negative character of the admonitory element (*pen* seems to prefer a negative introduction)." Nel, *The Structure and Ethos of the Wisdom Admonitions of the Wisdom Admonitions in Proverbs*, 74 (parentheses Nel's). Here what Nel considers the elements of wisdom admonition are mostly produced by the volitional verbs in Prov 1–9.

[5] In the prologue (1:2–7) of Prov 1–9, there is a sequence of purpose formed by these infinitives לְדַעַת ("to know," v. 2a), לְהָבִין ("to understand," v. 2b), לְקַחַת ("to take," v. 3a), לְתֵת ("to give," v. 4a) and לְהָבִין ("to understand," v. 6a). The jussive יִשְׁמַע comes up with its parallel יִקְנֶה ("let him acquire") in v. 5 and breaks the whole infinitive sequence. The rhetorical effect of reminding is to provide a command or invitation when the verbal form is changed.

[6] Concerning the nature of Prov 1–9, Waltke is insightful when he says, "The title conceives Proverbs as a book, but the verb 'to listen' entails that its pedagogic setting is oral (see 1:2, 8). By using the volitional form of the word 'to hear,' the preamble subtly includes the son among the wise who are addressed in the volitional form of this word (see 1:8). The force of the volitional form, which varies from command to request, functions here as an invitation since the wise want to obey such a command. And *add* (*yôsep*) protects the command "to hear" from being understood as an original commitment." Waltke, *The Book of Proverbs: Chapters 1–15*, 179. Also see Waltke and O'Connor, *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, 565. Sandoval keeps the similar opinion and also points out: "The use of jussive in v. 5, instead of some other verb forms, such as the imperfect, express the volitional aspect of the prologue—its command or invitation to the hearer to continue reading and to embark upon the task of attaining wisdom." Timothy J. Sandoval, *The Discourse of Wealth and Poverty in the Book of Proverbs* (Boston: Brill, 2006), 51.

relationship between speaker and listener. In Prov 1–9, all occurrences of שׁמע ("to listen/

hear") occur in the first colon in its verse (1:5a, 8a, 33a; 4:1a, 10a; 5:7a, 13a; 7:24a; 8:6a,

32a, 33a, 34a); nine out of its twelve occurrences are volitional, as follows.

Table 17. List of שׁמע in Prov 1–9

שׁמע is jussive	יִשְׁמַע חָכָם וְיוֹסֶף לֶקַח וְנָבוֹן תַּחְבֻּלוֹת יִקְנֶה: (Prov 1:5)
שׁמע is imperative	שְׁמַע בְּנִי מוּסַר אָבִיךָ וְאַל־תִּטֹּשׁ תּוֹרַת אִמֶּךָ: (Prov 1:8)
	שִׁמְעוּ בָנִים מוּסַר אָב וְהַקְשִׁיבוּ לָדַעַת בִּינָה: (Prov 4:1)
	שְׁמַע בְּנִי וְקַח אֲמָרָי וְיִרְבּוּ לְךָ שְׁנוֹת חַיִּים: (Prov 4:10)
	וְעַתָּה בָנִים שִׁמְעוּ־לִי וְאַל־תָּסוּרוּ מֵאִמְרֵי־פִי: (Prov 5:7)
	וְעַתָּה בָנִים שִׁמְעוּ־לִי וְהַקְשִׁיבוּ לְאִמְרֵי־פִי: (Prov 7:24)
	שִׁמְעוּ כִּי־נְגִידִים אֲדַבֵּר וּמִפְתַּח שְׂפָתַי מֵישָׁרִים: (Prov 8:6)
	וְעַתָּה בָנִים שִׁמְעוּ־לִי וְאַשְׁרֵי דְּרָכַי יִשְׁמֹרוּ: (Prov 8:32)
	שִׁמְעוּ מוּסָר וַחֲכָמוּ וְאַל־תִּפְרָעוּ: (Prov 8:33)

The volitional verb שׁמע is used as long as the speaker intends to elicit attention

from the listener (sometimes the emphatic עַתָּה ["now"] is used with שׁמע, see 5:7; 7:24;

8:23). Rhetorically, this word is placed at the head of discourses, or more precisely is

located in the exordia of the fatherly discourses (the 1st fatherly discourse [1:8–19], 5th

fatherly discourse [4:10–19], the fatherly echoing interlude [4:1–9]) as well as in the

exordium of wisdom speech (8:4–36). In fact, including שׁמע, there is no difference

between Prov 1–7 and 8–9 in the major usage of these volitional verbs. This is just one

point of evidence showing how the author of Prov 1–9 uses the father's rhetoric to unify

these nine chapters.

If the ratio and frequency of volitional verbs are recognized this adds to the

evidence for consistency/continuity between Prov 1–7 and 8–9. In Prov 1–9, there is a

total of five hundreds and twenty seven verbs. What follows is their distribution among

the seven verb conjugations.

Table 18. Ratio of Verbal Conjugation in Prov 1–9

Conjugation	Occurrences	Ratio in Total
Perfect	78 (including 9 waw–consecutive)	14.80%
Imperfect	231 (including 15 waw–consecutive)	43.83%
Infinitive	39	7.40%
Participle	81	15.37%
Imperative	81	15.37%
Jussive	9	1.71%
Cohortative	8	1.52%
Total	527	100.00%

The frequency of volitional verbs is of an amazingly high percentage compared to Prov 10–31 and the rest of the Wisdom Literature (Job and Ecclesiastes). There are eighty one occurrences of the imperative (15.37%),[7] nine occurrences of the jussive (1.71%)[8], and

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[7] In Prov 1–7, see these imperatives in 1:5, 11, 15; 3:3 (twice), 4, 5, 6, 7 (twice), 9, 21, 28; 4:1 (twice), 4 (twice), 5 (twice), 6, 7 (twice), 8, 10 (twice), 13 (twice), 15 (thrice), 20 (twice), 21, 23, 24 (twice), 26, 27; 5:1 (twice), 7, 8, 15, 18; 6:3 (5 times!), 5, 6 (thrice), 20, 21 (thrice); 7:1, 2 (twice), 3 (twice), 4, 18, 24 (twice). Also in Prov 8–9, see the imperatives in 8:5 (twice), 6, 10, 32, 33 (twice); 9:5 (thrice), 6 (thrice), 8, 9 (twice). Among these imperatives, there are as many as fourteen aural imperatives (שְׁמַע, שִׁמְעוּ, הַקְשִׁיבָה and הַקְשִׁיבוּ), namely 17.3% of all eighty one imperatives of Prov 1–9. These aural imperatives are always used with vocatives (my son, or sons) and appeal to willing acceptance by the listener, helping to build up a relationship of "I–Thou" (speaker and listener) on a rhetorical basis. The rest of the imperatives are networking so that the listener (the son) not only accepts the words but also carries out what is told him (e.g. come, keep, get, don't forget . . .). A commanding force comes upon the listener whenever an imperative is employed. In addition, imperative verbs often appear in chapter four (twenty five times within twenty seven verses!) and even the same imperative (קְנֵה, ["acquire"]) occurs twice in the same verse (Prov 4:7). The volitional intention is emphasized through these second–person imperatives. The grammatical locution common to both Prov 1–7 and 8–9 drives the reading of the text towards continuity/unity rather than discontinuity There is no major difference between Prov 1–7 and Prov 8–9 concerning the usage of imperative (style or form).

[8] In Prov 1–7, see the jussives in 1:5, 10; 3:7, 8, 11; 7:25 (twice); and in Prov 8–9, also see the jussives in 9:8, 9. Jussive verbs within the father's rhetoric only appear in chapters one, three, seven and nine. These verbs also carry the speaker's will, mostly in a commanding way (note: There would be more occurrences of the jussive if two hundreds and thirty one imperfect verbs might be treated as jussive in their context). For example, fearing that the seductive woman might lure the listening son away from appropriate behavior, the speaking father speaks these words, "אַל־יֵשְׂטְ אֶל־דְּרָכֶיהָ לִבֶּךָ אַל־תֵּטַע בִּנְתִיבוֹתֶיהָ" ("do not let your heart turn to her way; don't let it go astray into her paths" in Prov 7:25). The two jussive verbs אַל־תֵּטַע ("do not let turn") and אַל־יֵשְׂטְ (do not let go astray) (with the negative adverb אַל) target not the human heart but how the will of the speaking father may be achieved. Except for וְיוֹסֶף (third person) in Prov 1:5 and 9:9, the rest of the jussives are used to demonstrate a command or an exhortation in the second person. Joüon indicates: "The imperative is the volitive mode of the second person. The inflection of the imperative consists of the sufformatives ִי , וּ and ־נָה of the future. The theme of the imperative is that of the future, e. g. קְטֹל ("kill") as in תִּקְטֹל ("you will kill")." Paul Joüon, *A Grammar of Biblical Hebrew* (Rome: Pontifical

eight occurrences of the cohortative (1.52%),[9] totaling 18.6% of all Hebrew verbs in Prov

1–9. Volitional verbs are seldom found in this *high degree of intensity* elsewhere in the

Hebrew Bible.

The will of the speaker which exists in chapters 1–7 continues into chapters 8–9 as

evidenced by the consistent volitional verbs in both sections. That is, all these volitional

verbs are skillfully used as devices of the father's rhetoric, not only directly through the

father's mouth, but also indirectly through the mouths of other figures (e.g. Lady

Wisdom, the adulteress, etc.). Given an understanding of the father's rhetoric, a holistic

reading of Prov 1–9 is possible.

Adverbial Clauses

The orality of poetic discourses may be approached through the relationship among

clauses; this is especially true in Prov 1–9. Within the language of the father's rhetoric,

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Biblical Inst., 1991), 141.

[9] See the cohortatives in 1:11 (twice), 12, 23 (twice); 7:7, 18 (twice). The cohortatives spoken through the mouth of the father are addressed to the listener intentionally in an indirect way. The three cohortative occurrences in the first fatherly discourse are used metaphorically as portrayed through the voices of "the evil men." The beginning hypothetical particle אִם (if) provides the condition for the following cohortatives: "*If*(אִם) they say, come with us, *let us lie in wait* (נֶאֶרְבָה) for blood, *let us ambush* (נִצְפְּנָה) the innocent without reason; *let us swallow them* (נִבְלָעֵם) alive like Sheol" (Prov 1:11–12a). These three cohortatives are not spoken directly but indirectly, although still originating from the speaking father. The other two singular cohortatives (אַבִּיעָה ["let me pure out"], אוֹדִיעָה ["let me make known"]) in chapter one are given by Lady Wisdom (Prov 1:23), who is used as a metaphorical figure by the father. This is the first place where we see the father's rhetoric using a different speaker, and this speaker is Lady Wisdom. The father hides himself behind Lady Wisdom in order to create a new colloquial relationship from the first–and–direct "I–Thou" (the father to the son) to the second–and–indirect "I–Thou" (Lady Wisdom to the simple). The last three cohortatives appear in chapter seven (Prov 7:7, 18). Except for the cohortative אָבִינָה ("let me discern") in Prov 7:7, which is ambiguous in form and meaning, the father hides himself again and speaks through the mouth of the lewd woman who says, "Come, let us take our fill (נִרְוֶה) of loves till morning, let us delight ourselves (נִתְעַלְּסָה) with loves" (Prov 7:18). The lewd woman uses the two cohortatives (נִרְוֶה ["let us drink"], נִתְעַלְּסָה ["let us delight"]) to seduce her victim (Prov 7:6–27). Here the rhetorical intention of the speaker is to switch the first "I–Thou" (the father vs. the son) to the second "I–Thou" (the adulteress vs. the young victim). In fact, the father desires to create the adulteress in the imagination of his audience; he uses her to warn his son indirectly of the possible outcome if he does not resist temptation.

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there is a preference for the use of conditional markers כִּי[10] and אִם[11] to begin adverbial clauses.[12] These rhetorical skills are designed to advance the reasoning of cause–consequence, and thus form an inner logic among sentences, resulting in better reading.[13] Because in the dynamics of a discourse, the speaker has to make his expression more persuasive, the use of an adverbial clause is therefore all–important.

In the forty–four total occurrences of adverbial כִּי in both Prov 1–7 and Prov 8–9, the similarity in usage is convincing. For instance, in the beginning of chapter three, using an apodosis clause, the speaking father reminds the son not to forget his teaching (תּוֹרָתִ) and his commands (מִצְוֹתַי) (Prov 3:1), and reminds him of his promised reward, "*for* (כִּי) length of days and long life, and peace will accrue to you" (Prov 3:2). The protasis clause led by this adverbial כִּי provides the motivation to listen to the previous sentence of command. This exemplifies how the father's rhetoric employs כִּי for expressing *motivation*. A similar motivation is used in chapters 8–9 to encourage the listener: "For (כִּי) whoever finds me, finds life, and obtains favor from Yahweh" (Prov

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[10] Prov 1:9, 16, 17, 29, 32; 2:3, 6, 10, 18, 21; 3:2, 12, 14, 25, 26, 32; 4:2, 3, 8, 13, 16, 17, 22, 23; 5:3, 21; 6:3, 23, 26, 30, 34, 35, 7:6, 19, 23, 26; 8:6, 7, 11, 35; 9:11, 18 (thirty six times in Prov 1–7 and six in Prov 8–9).

[11] Prov 1:10, 11; 2:1, 3, 4; 3:24, 30, 34; 4:16; 6:1, 28; 9:12 (eleven times in Prov 1–7 and one in Prov 8–9).

[12] As John C. L. Gibson introduces the usage of adverbial clause, he says: "Adverbial clauses are subordinated to a main clause, modifying it or the verbs in it in much the same way as an adverb or prep. phrase. The main clause (apodosis) and the subordinate clause (protasis) together form what is traditionally called a complex sentence, but it is the adverbial function of the subordinate clause which is significant syntactically." John C. L. Gibson, *Davidson's Introduction Hebrew Grammar* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1994), 151.

[13] Perry indicates: "Indeed, although such cause and result statements can be considered as the soul of the didactic function of proverbs, such designs are not always apparent from external form. For example, causal structures are typically *equational*, thus revealing an affinity with that type." Perry, *Wisdom Literature and the Structure of Proverbs*, 78 (italics Perry's). If Perry's observation is accepted, the father, the speaker, uses a great deal of cause–consequence reasoning through the adverbial clauses in order to build the equational structure among cola, lines and verses (e.g., 1:16–17; 2:3–5), and to increase the strength of his persuasion.

8:35). Many other examples of this may be observed in both Prov 1–7 (1:8b–9, 28–29; 3:11–12, 13–14; 25–26; 27–32; 4:1–2a, 14–17; 21–23; 5:1–2; 15–21; 6:21–23, 24–26, 33–34; 7:18–19, 25–26) and Prov 8–9 (8:6–7, 10–11, 34–35; 9:10–11, 13–15). Apparently, the motivation of the father's rhetoric in Prov 8–9 is expressed through the mouth of personified Wisdom in a metaphorical way. The stylistic expression of motivation in Prov 1–7 is not noticeably different from Prov 8–9.

As for the other adverbial mark אִם, its usage is inclined to causality, such as כִּי, and it occurs in both blocks of chapters 1–7 and 8–9. There are several possibilities for the usage of אִם[14] but most of its uses in Prov 1–9 are conditional/ contingent. That is, it introduces the protasis (if) of a conditional statement. For instance, the series of protasis clauses, "My son, if (אִם) you receive my words, and treasure my commands within you . . ." (Prov 2:1), "If (אִם) you cry out for discernment, and lift up your voice for understanding" (Prov 2:3), and "If (אִם) you seek her as silver and search for her as for hidden treasures" (Prov 2:4) are followed by a statement of apodosis, "then you will understand the fear of Yahweh, and find the knowledge of God" (Prov 2:5). The same conditional/contingent usage of this adverb also occurs in the block of Prov 8–9 (e.g. 9:12a). These rhetorical arrangements are designed to form an inner logic among sentences, creating a reasonable reading of the text.

According to the adverbial clauses led by כִּי and אִם, continuity/consistency exists between Prov 1–7 and 8–9. And the unity of Prov 1–9 is planned and prepared as early as

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[14] The usage of אם may be conditional/contingency, concessive, alternative, exceptive, maledictory, oath, and interrogatory. See Bill T. Arnold and John H. Choi, *A Guide to Biblical Hebrew Syntax* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 143–6.

the author decides to develop the rationale of the father's rhetoric through the linguistic

skill (adverbial clause). In fact, concerning the usage of adverbial clause (advancing the

reasoning of cause–consequence), it may be said that Prov 1–9 sets the stage for the

coming content in the Book of Proverbs.[15]

Parallelism

The feature of parallelism is consistent in both Prov 1–7 and 8–9. The parallelisms

in both blocks, which have a special emphasis on teaching,[16] are pedagogically formed

for the purpose of persuasion (1:2–7). Philip Johannes Nel approaches the parallelisms in

Prov 1–9 and indicates:

> From our analysis of the admonition it has appeared that the form of the
> admonition is linguistically distinctive of the wisdom saying. The admonition
> gives preference to the imperative mood (or relevant mood) whereas the
> wisdom saying is formulated in the indicative mood. The *parallelismus*
> *membrorum*, as the linguistic explication of the traditional symmetry of
> thought, is normally constructed in the wisdom saying in coordination and in
> the admonition in sub–ordination. The admonition always consists of a
> motivative clause, whereas the motivative clause very seldom occurs within
> an ordinary wisdom saying.[17]

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[15] In the total one hundred and two occurrences of כִּי and twenty eight occurrences of אִם in the Book of Proverbs, Prov 1–9 provides the examples and nuances for understanding the adverbial clauses led by כִּי (e.g, 22:18a ,22a; 23:1a, 5b, 7a, 9a, 11a, 13b, 17b, 18a, 21a, 27a, etc.) and אִם (e.g., 18:2b; 19:19b; 22:27a; 23:2b; 15a, 17b, 18a, etc.).

[16] In Prov 1–9, many parallelisms, according to the writer's observation, are the ones that are designed particularly for illustrating teaching. In the beginning of each of the ten fatherly discourses, the wisdom which the father intends to convey to his son usually appears in the form of word pairs and thereby produces parallelisms. For example, instruction // teaching (1:8), words // commandments and wisdom // understanding (2:1–2), teaching // commandments (3:1), wisdom // discretion (3:21), instruction // insight (4:1), words // sayings (4:20), wisdom // understanding (5:1), commandment // teaching (6:20), words // commandments and commandments // teachings (7:1–2). In the wisdom poems, there is also sapiential parallelism such as my (wisdom's) thoughts // my (wisdom's) words (1:23), my (wisdom's) counsel // my (wisdom's) reproof (1:30), wisdom // understanding (3:19), wisdom // understanding (8:1), and wisdom // insight (9:10).

[17] Nel, *The Structure and Ethos of the Wisdom Admonitions of the Wisdom Admonitions in Proverbs*, 74.

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Nel recognizes Prov 1–9 as the form of the admonition (teaching),[18] in which the skills of

parallelism are useful for the expression of "the traditional symmetry of thought".

The patterns of parallelism in the both blocks (Prov 1–7 and 8–9) tend to include

causality, prophetic description, hyperbole, imagination and judgment in their

parallelisms so that the persuasion is stronger. Here is a list of examples.

Table 19. List of Patterns of Parallelism in Prov 1–9[19]

Patterns of Parallelism	Proverbs 1–7	Proverbs 8–9
Parallelism of Causality	1:15–16, 24, 32–33; 3:1–2, 9–10; 7:19–20	8:15–18; 20–21, 34–36; 9:11
Parallelism of Prophetic Description	1:26–28 (20–33); 3:19–20; 4:8–9; 6:31	8:22–31, 34–36; 9:1–6
Parallelism of Hyperbole	1:12; 4:16; 5:3–4; 6:10–11	8:7–11, 18–19, 34–36; 9:17–18
Parallelism of Imagination	1:11–12; 1:20–33; 3:16–18 (13–20); 4:6	Prov 8:1–3; 9:1–3, 5, 13–15, 17–18
Parallelism of Judgment	2:17; 3:34–35; 5:12–14; 7:26–27; 8:35–36;	8:5, 10–11, 17, 19, 34–36; 9:7–12

As is seen from the examples in this list, the parallelisms in both Prov 1–7 and 8–9

demonstrate many similar skills in the father's rhetoric. The listener/reader has to pay

close attention to understand what is behind the literary *tour–de–force* in parallelism.

Knowing the complicacy of these rhetorical skills, a semantic approach to the

parallelisms in Prov 1–9 appears insufficient, and the sound study on parallelism must

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[18] Ibid.

[19] The parallelism of causality emphasizes the rationale of cause and consequence; for examples, 1:15–16; 3:1–2; and 9:11. The parallelism of prophetic description occurs the consequences that might happen, not according to divine revelation, but according to human experience; for examples, 1:26–28; 4:8–9; 6:31 (Prov 1–7) and 8:22–31; 9:1–6 (Prov 8–9). The parallelism of hyperbole exaggerates in order to achieve persuasion; for instances, 1:12; 4:16; 5:3–4; 6:10–11 (Prov 1–7) and 8:7–11, 18–19; 9:17–18 (Prov 8–9). The parallelism of imagination creates figures or images in order to impress its rationale; for instances, 1:11–12; 3:16–18; 4:6 (Prov 1–7) and Prov 8–9. Here the personification of Lady Wisdom (as well as Dame Folly) is a good case to illustrate the skill of imagination in parallelism. The parallelism of judgment presents a moral decision or judgment on what is good or evil; for examples, 2:17; 3:34–35; 5:12–14; 7:26–27 (Prov 1–7) and 8:34–36; 9:7–12 (Prov 8–9).

include syntactical and phonological perspectives.[20]

The metaphorical tendency in parallelism is very common and consistent in both Prov 1–7 and 8–9. For example, in the block of Prov 1–7, the cistern is parallel to the well in Prov 5:15, and both of them are metaphorical expressions of a sexual relationship with a woman (wife). The metaphorical tendency in parallelism also is also seen in Sheol // pit (1:12), ox // stag (7:22). In the block of Prov 8–9, the major metaphor is personified Wisdom; the skillful parallelism can be seen in the contrast between Lady Wisdom and Dame Folly (9:1–6 and vv.13–18). In fact, the metaphorical figures appear in pairs such as Lady Wisdom, the adulteress (strange woman) and Dame Folly (see Tables 4 and 13).[21]

A metaphorical expression is used to make a word–pair or a sound–pair. Following Berlin's three perspectives (semantic, syntactical and phonological),[22] the father's rhetoric creates many parallelisms. The word pairs or sound pairs occur throughout Prov

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[20] As he approaches the parallelism in the Hebrew Bible, James Kugel describes the semantic relationship between all parallel lines, "A, what's more, B"; that is, the second line always goes beyond the meaning of the first. Kugel asserts that "Biblical parallelism is of one sort, 'A, and what's more, B,' or a hundred sorts; but is not three." James Kugel, *The Idea of Biblical Poetry: Parallelism and Its History* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1981), 58 and also see his relevant discussion in 51–54. Kugel's semantic approach appears insufficient while encountering the subtlety and variety of parallelism in Prov1–9. M. O'Connor reminds us of the complicacy of the parallelism in Hebrew poetry by indicating, "Parallelism is like any term in technical language: without restrictions it can be extended to any phenomenon; and it has been." Michael P. O'Connor, *Hebrew Verse Structure* (Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 1980), 88–9. Instead of one perspective, Adele Berlin suggests that more semantic, syntactical and phonological insights on parallelism are needed if an effective communication is supposed to relate to various aspects of language. See her postulation in Adele Berlin, *The Dynamics of Biblical Parallelism*, (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1985), 141. According to Berlin, "Parallelism, then, consists of a network of equivalence and/or contrasts involving many aspects and levels of language. Moreover, by means of these linguistic *equivalence* and *contrasts*, parallelism calls attention to itself and to the message which it bears. Parallelism embodies the poetic function, and the poetic function heightens the focus on the message." Ibid (italics by the author). The idea of equivalence and contrast truly reflects the major equivalence/contrast of the personification in wisdom and anti–wisdom (Lady Wisdom v.s. Adulteress/Dame Folly) in Prov 1–7 and 8–9. Cf. the relevant discussion of structure and content arrangement in chapter five.

[21] See Table 4 in 72, Table 13 in 98, and the relevant discussion in 96–102.

[22] Berlin, *The Dynamics of Biblical Parallelism*, 31–126.

1–7 and 8–9. For instance, the semantic pairs include Prov 1:1, 1:8 (father // mother; the instruction // the law; to listen to // do not forsake), 2:20 (to walk // to keep; the way of goodness // the paths of righteousness). The phonological pairs include: 3:13 (אָדָם [man] // אָדָם [man]; מָה [qamets ending] // נָה [qamets ending]), 5:7 (לִי [to me] // פִּי [my mouth]). The syntactical pairs include: 6:22 (preposition בְּ+ infinitive // proposition בְּ + infinitive), 7:21 (לְקְחָהּ [her teaching] // בְּחֵלֶק [with smoothness]; הִטַּתּוּ [she persuades him] // תַּדִּיחֶנּוּ [she compels him]), and 8:25 (בְּטֶרֶם [before] // לִפְנֵי [before]).

These features of parallelism are consistent throughout the entire block of Prov 1–9. The consistent use of parallelism in both Prov 1–7 and 8–9 shows the continuity and unity of the father's rhetoric throughout Prov 1–9. This is particularly true in the use of parallelism in Prov 1–9 if the father's rhetoric is appropriately recognized and analyzed.

Sound

The perspective of sound is critical to grasping whether the continuity and unity of the father's rhetoric exists between Prov 1–7 and 8–9. It is impossible to ignore sound as a critical element in the reading of Hebrew poetry. According to Crenshaw, the seven rhetorical devices which are used in the Book of Proverbs, namely paronomasia, assonance, alliteration, puns, repetition, rhyme, and synonymy, are all related to sound.[23] The father's rhetoric uses this element of sound skillfully in both Prov 1–7 and 8–9.

First, almost every discourse, including both the ten fatherly discourses (Prov 1–7)

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[23] When Crenshaw explains the didactic impulse of Prov 1–9, he introduces many different methods, for instance, the shift from observation to exhortation or admonition, motive clauses and energetic warnings. Among these impulses, Crenshaw indicates: "We note further the introduction of an arsenal of rhetorical devices: paronomasia (a word play or pun on the sound a word), assonance, alliteration, puns, repetition, rhyme, and synonymy." Crenshaw, *Old Testament Wisdom*, 66 and see the relevant discussion in 66–7.

and the wisdom poems (Prov 8–9), has a *qamets* at the ending of the first colon/line of each discourse (Prov 1:8, 20; 2:1; 3:1, 21; 4:1, 10, 20; 5:1; 6:1, 20; 7:1; 8:1; 9:1). This creates a common assonance (*qamets*) which strengthens the impression of unity and continuity. Here is the list of the *qamets* endings.

Table 20. List of *Qamets*–Endings in Each Heading Verse of Discourses[24]

Proverbs 1–7	
(First fatherly discourse) שְׁמַע בְּנִי מוּסַר אָבִיךָ וְאַל־תִּטֹּשׁ תּוֹרַת אִמֶּךָ	1:8
(Echoing interlude in 1:20–33) חָכְמוֹת בַּחוּץ תָּרֹנָּה בָּרְחֹבוֹת תִּתֵּן קוֹלָהּ	1:20
(Second fatherly discourse) בְּנִי אִם־תִּקַּח אֲמָרָי וּמִצְוֹתַי תִּצְפֹּן אִתָּךְ	2:1
(Third fatherly discourse) בְּנִי תּוֹרָתִי אַל־תִּשְׁכָּח וּמִ צְוֹתַי יִצֹּר לִבֶּךָ	3:1
(Fourth fatherly discourse) בְּנִי אַל־יָלֻזוּ מֵעֵינֶיךָ נְצֹר תֻּשִׁיָּה וּמְזִמָּה	3:21
(Echoing interlude in 4:1–10) שִׁמְעוּ בָנִים מוּסַר אָב וְהַקְשִׁיבוּ לָדַעַת בִּינָה	4:1
(Fifth fatherly discourse) שְׁמַע בְּנִי וְקַח אֲמָרָי וְיִרְבּוּ לְךָ שְׁנוֹת חַיִּים	4:10
(Sixth fatherly discourse) בְּנִי לִדְבָרַי הַקְשִׁיבָה לַאֲמָרַי הַט־אָזְנֶךָ	4:20
(Seventh fatherly discourse) בְּנִי לְחָכְמָתִי הַקְשִׁיבָה לִתְבוּנָתִי הַט־אָזְנֶךָ	5:1
(Eighth fatherly discourse) בְּנִי אִם־עָרַבְתָּ לְרֵעֶךָ תָּקַעְתָּ לַזָּר כַּפֶּיךָ	6:1
(Ninth fatherly discourse) נְצֹר בְּנִי מִצְוַת אָבִיךָ וְאַל־תִּטֹּשׁ תּוֹרַת אִמֶּךָ	6:20
(Tenth fatherly discourse) בְּנִי שְׁמֹר אֲמָרָי וּמִ צְוֹתַי תִּצְפֹּן אִתָּךְ	7:1
Proverbs 8–9	
(Climax chapter) הֲלֹא־חָכְמָה תִקְרָא וּתְבוּנָה תִּתֵּן קוֹלָהּ	8:1
(Concluding chapter) חָכְמוֹת בָּנְתָה בֵיתָהּ חָצְבָה עַמּוּדֶיהָ שִׁבְעָה	9:1

Second, there are specific consonants and vowels which are combined to form a special ending. Within lines and cola, the father's rhetoric has a preference for using the vowel *qamets* together with the consonant *kaph* (כ/ךָ). For instance:

(1:9a) כִּי לִוְיַת חֵן הֵם לְרֹאשֶׁךָ	(1:9b) וַעֲנָקִים לְגַרְגְּרֹתֶיךָ;
(4:21a) אַל־יַלִּיזוּ מֵעֵינֶיךָ	(4:21b) שָׁמְרֵם בְּתוֹךְ לְבָבֶךָ;
(5:15a) שְׁתֵה־מַיִם מִבּוֹרֶךָ	(5:15b) וְנֹזְלִים מִתּוֹךְ בְּאֵרֶךָ;
(6:2a) נוֹקַשְׁתָּ בְאִמְרֵי־פִיךָ	(6:2b) נִלְכַּדְתָּ בְּאִמְרֵי־פִיךָ;

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[24] In the ending consonant of those fourteen verses, ה (*he*) and כ/ךָ (*kaph*, second–person possessive ending) are preferred by the father's rhetoric. These rhetorical skills are useful to produce an "I–Thou" relationship between the speaker and the listener.

(7:3a) קָשְׁרֵם עַל־אֶצְבְּעֹתֶיךָ   (7:3b) כָּתְבֵם עַל־לוּחַ לִבֶּךָ

(9:8a) אַל־תּוֹכַח לֵץ פֶּן־יִשְׂנָאֶךָ   (9:8b) הוֹכַח לְחָכָם וְיֶאֱהָבֶךָ

(9:11a) כִּי־בִי יִרְבּוּ יָמֶיךָ

There are many other similar cases in Prov 3:1–2, 6–8, 9, 21–24, 26; 4:9, 11–12, 20, 23–24, 25–26; 5:8–11, 16–18; 6:3–4, 9, 11, 20–22, 25; 7: 2, 15, 25; 9:11. These *kaph–qamets* endings (the second person singular affix) in cola or lines can function as temporary or full stops in the reading, and sometimes also make a well–built parallelism in double–double form (Prov 1:8–9 and 6:1–2), A–B–A'–B' shape (Prov 5:9–10), or a chiasm (Prov 4:25–26). The *kaph–qamets* mode exists not only in Prov 1–7 but also in Prov 8–9 as part of the father's rhetoric.

The father's rhetoric also employs the skill of alliteration, namely the correspondence of sounds at the beginning of words to promote a better reading. Prov 1:2–6 has a series of *lamed* (ל) plus *qamets* which create alliteration. Both Prov 3:23–26 and 27–32 begin with the *aleph* (א) sequence in these lines, ending with a causal mark כִּי in the last line (Prov 3:26 and 32).[25] Alliteration exists not only in chapters 1–7 but also in

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[25] Prov 3:23–26:

v. 23 אָז תֵּלֵךְ לָבֶטַח דַּרְכֶּךָ וְרַגְלְךָ לֹא תִגּוֹף:

v. 24 אִם־תִּשְׁכַּב לֹא־תִפְחָד וְשָׁכַבְתָּ וְעָרְבָה שְׁנָתֶךָ:

v. 25 אַל־תִּירָא מִפַּחַד פִּתְאֹם וּמִשֹּׁאַת רְשָׁעִים כִּי תָבֹא:

v. 26 כִּי־יְהוָה יִהְיֶה בְכִסְלֶךָ וְשָׁמַר רַגְלְךָ מִלָּכֶד:

Prov 3:27–32:

v. 27 אַל־תִּמְנַע־טוֹב מִבְּעָלָיו בִּהְיוֹת לְאֵל יָדֶיךָ [יָדְךָ] לַעֲשׂוֹת:

v. 28 אַל־תֹּאמַר לְרֵעֲיךָ [לְרֵעֲךָ] לֵךְ וָשׁוּב וּמָחָר אֶתֵּן וְיֵשׁ אִתָּךְ:

v. 29 אַל־תַּחֲרֹשׁ עַל־רֵעֲךָ רָעָה וְהוּא־יוֹשֵׁב לָבֶטַח אִתָּךְ:

v. 30 אַל־תָּרוֹב [תָּרִיב] עִם־אָדָם חִנָּם אִם־לֹא גְמָלְךָ רָעָה:

v. 31 אַל־תְּקַנֵּא בְּאִישׁ חָמָס וְאַל־תִּבְחַר בְּכָל־דְּרָכָיו:

v. 32 כִּי תוֹעֲבַת יְהוָה נָלוֹז וְאֶת־יְשָׁרִים סוֹדוֹ:

chapters 8–9. Prov 8:24–28 also has an alliteration combination with parallelisms as follows:

(v. 24a) בְּאֵין מַעְיָנוֹת נִכְבַּדֵּי־מָיִם // (v. 24b) בְּאֵין־תְּהֹמוֹת חוֹלָלְתִּי
(v. 25a) לִפְנֵי גְבָעוֹת חוֹלָלְתִּי // (v. 25b) בְּטֶרֶם הָרִים הָטְבָּעוּ
(v. 26a) עַד־לֹא עָשָׂה אֶרֶץ וְחוּצוֹת // (v. 26b) וְרֹאשׁ עַפְרוֹת תֵּבֵל
(v. 27a) בַּהֲכִינוֹ שָׁמַיִם שָׁם אָנִי // (v. 27b) בְּחוּקוֹ חוּג עַל־פְּנֵי תְהוֹם
(v. 28a) בְּעַזּוֹז עִינוֹת תְּהוֹם // (v. 28b) בְּאַמְּצוֹ שְׁחָקִים מִמָּעַל

Verses 24 and 25 begin with the *bet* (בּ) and form a double parallelism. Verses 28 and 29 have the same structure with the *bet* and make another parallelism. So the middle line (v. 27) is sandwiched in this structure and begins with *ayin* (עַ) as opposed to surrounding lines which begin with *bet* (בּ). This alliteration is yet another piece of evidence showing that the father's rhetoric exists in Prov 1–7 and continues in Prov 8–9.

These acoustic features at work within the father's rhetoric require the text to be read holistically and continually. The artistic presentation makes recitation more executable and at the same time promotes reading to a smoother level. There is no major difference in the fatherly discourses (Prov 1–7) and the wisdom poems (Prov 8–9) in this regard.

Summary

Thus this study demonstrates that the father's rhetoric uses stylistic elements for persuasion throughout the block of Prov 1–9. The linguistic evidence, such as volitional verbs, adverbial clauses, parallelisms, and sound, illustrates the continuity and unity that exists between Prov 1–7 and 8–9. The single author (or editor) uses the unifying father's rhetoric to manage his literary skill beginning in Prov 1–7 and climaxing in Prov 8–9.

Ethos of the Father's Rhetoric

This section discusses how the ethos (persuasion through personal credibility, credentials, and good will) of the father's rhetoric supports the continuity and unity of Prov 1–9. In the areas of motivation, authority, and persuasive expressions, this study finds the same or similar ethos at work in Prov 1–7 and 8–9,[26] therefore proving that the father is the direct and chief speaker, and Lady Wisdom and other figures are the indirect expressions of the same father. Discussing the relationship between ethos and persona in discourse, Roger D. Cherry indicates

> Distinguishing between ethos and persona need not imply that we should reserve ethos for describing authorial presence in nonliterary texts and persona for treating authorial presence in literary texts. To the contrary, both notions may well be necessary for describing both types of discourse. While it is important to distinguish among them, the rhetorical concept of ethos and the (essentially) literary concepts of the persona and the implied author can complement and enrich one another. In literary discourse, *ethos can be accompanied by other forms of self–portrayal best described in terms of persona.* The relative prominence (and proportion) of ethos and persona in a given text will depend not only on the general discourse type but on *the writer's representation of key elements in the rhetorical situation*–that is, audience, subject matter, exigence, and the writer him– or herself.[27]

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[26] In their study on the issue of ethos, Howard H. Martin and Kenneth E. Andersen indicate: "The ethos of the source is related in some way to the impact of the message. This generalization applies not only to political, social, religious, and economic issues but also to matters of aesthetic judgment and personal taste." Howard H. Martin and Kenneth E. Andersen, *Speech Communication: Analysis and Readings* (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1969), 199. "Speech is inseparable from our consciousness," Walter J. Ong thus explains the function of proverbs, "and it has fascinated human beings, elicited serious reflection about itself, from the very early stages of consciousness, long before writing came into existence. Proverbs from all over the world are rich with observations about this overwhelmingly human phenomenon of speech in its native oral form, about its powers, its beauties, its dangers. The same fascination with oral speech continues unabated for centuries after writing comes into use." Walter J. Ong, *Orality & Literacy: The Technologizing of the Word* (New York: Routledge, 1991), 9. Based on these understandings about ethos and speech, this study picks the areas of motivation, authority, encouragement and warning to investigate how the speaker's ethos in Prov 1–7 works in Prov 8–9.

[27] Roger D. Cherry, "Ethos Versus Persona: Self–Representation in Written Discourse" in *Landmark Essays on Voice and Writing* (ed. Peter Elbow; Mahwah, N.J.: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 1994), 102 (parenthesis by Cherr and italics by this author). Cherry gives some further explanation and says, "Judgments are not one dimensional. When we evaluate a writer's intelligence, integrity, and competence, we evaluate his or her basic character and credibility by assessing qualities that fall under the rubric of ethos. At the same time, when we make judgments about 'voice' or 'tone' and consider the role or roles the

It is necessary to approach the interaction of ethos and persona (especially the father and Lady Wisdom) in Prov 1–9 in order to comprehend how the father's rhetoric works according to the will of the single author/editor. Before this investigation begins, there are two misguided approaches to the issue of ethos which must be noted.

Two Misguided Approaches

The issue of ethos is misunderstood and the integral picture of the chief speaker is lost if the father's rhetoric is not appropriately recognized in Prov 1–9. There are two approaches which do this, either by identifying an inappropriate rhetoric for unifying these nine chapters, or by standing for the setting that is non–existent in the text.

First, treating Solomon as the chief speaker of Prov 1–9 confuses the ethos of the implied speaker as well as the meaning of the text. Solomon, the wise king who appears in the superscription (1:1), seems a possible speaker for the ethos of the entire corpus (Prov 1–9); however, the text does not support this assumption.[28] Johnny E. Miles chooses Solomon as the speaking persona and assumes that Prov 1–9 is no more than a

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writer creates for him– or herself in the text, we evaluate qualities that fall under the rubric of persona." Ibid., 103.

[28] For instance, the secret peeking from behind a lattice was not appropriate behavior for an Israelite king (Prov 7:6, and also vv. 7–27). In 1 Kings 1–11 (cf. 1 Chr 28–2; Chr 9) or other portions in the Hebrew Bible, there is not a clear record or description that can associate Kings Solomon and David with the speaker's autobiographic sayings in Prov 4:3–9. Besides, much of the teachings on marriage reflect just the opposite of Solomon's life as a king with many wives (see Prov 5:15–20; 2:16–19; 5:1–10; 6:24–35; 7:4–27; 9:13–18; cf. 1 Kgs 11:1–13). Dealing with the issue of the ethos in Prov 1–9, Fitzpatrick–McKinley considers: "To point to a rural ethos of the texts in order to prove the rural and domestic background of Proverbs, or indeed to isolate an urban and pro–monarchic ethos to indicate a court setting, is to exaggerate the separateness and distinctiveness of the urban and the rural in an early society where it is more than likely that the city and the surrounding rural areas existed in a relationship of mutual interdependence. Lemaire (1990) has pointed out that we need to take seriously the fact that ancient Israelite society was somewhat diversified. While some Israelites and Judeans lived in farms or in village communities, others resided in towns or in the capital. Consequently there is reflected in the wisdom literature a mixture of a rural and an urban ethos." Anne Fitzpatrick–McKinley, *The Transformation of Torah from Scribal Advice to Law* (JSOTSup 287; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999), 156.

satire of Solomon the fool king.[29] Miles' "reader–response strategy of semiotics" makes

King Solomon do and say everything in the text, including the unthinkable peeking

through the lattice (Prov 7:6).[30] While the Solomonic superscription is canonically

significant[31] and King Solomon is a possible candidate (author or contributor) for the

formation of Prov 1–9, still the ethos of the speaker is definitely a father's (cf. the ten

fatherly discourses), not a king's.[32] The ethos of king cannot be found in Prov 1–7 (except

for the superscription in 1:1), let alone Prov 8–9.

Second, some scholars consider the speaking persona to be a teacher, and the ethos

in Prov 1–9 to be that of a teacher.[33] If this assumption is convenicing, then Prov 1–9

becomes a textbook for children in an ancient school; however, there is no internal

evidence to support this assumption.[34] Indeed the purpose of Prov 1–9 is to educate the

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[29] See Johnny E. Miles, *Wise King–Royal Fool: Semiotics, Satire and Proverbs 1–9* (JSOTSup 399, London: T & T Clark International, 2004), 41–46, particularly footnote 1 on 41. Miles considers that 1 Kings 1–11, the indeterminate narrative of the intertext, "provides concrete examples of Solomon's unjust socio–economic policies while illumining the true nature of Solomon's 'wisdom.'"

[30] Miles admits that the method he uses for studying Prov 1–9 is "a reader–response strategy of semiotics" Ibid., 14. For a better understanding of Miles' terminology, the so–called reader–response strategy is understood and defined as "a development within literary studies which focus on the relationship between text and receiver" See Bernard C. Lategan, "Reader Response Theory," *ABD* 5:625. This method considers the role of the reader (both real reader and implied reader) as pivotal for the interpretation of the text. If the ethos of Prov 1–9 is satirical and includes this kind of Solomonic rhetoric, how should the Book of Qoheleth be treated? (A repentance after the "admonitory" satire of Proverbs?) And what are we to make of the Song of Songs?

[31] As Childs indicates, "The superscription which assigns the proverbs to Solomon serves an important canonical function in establishing the relative age of wisdom within Israel. This sapiential witness arises at the beginning of the monarchy and continues through Hezekiah's reign and beyond. The superscription ties the proverbs to the period of the early monarchy and thus opposes the attempt to derive them only from the late post–exilic period." Childs, *Introduction to the Old Testament as Scripture* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1979), 552.

[32] King Solomon might be the original author or editor (cf. 1:1; 10:1; 25:1) but the text of Prov 1–9 employs the father's rhetoric as the unifying rhetoric, not king's rhetoric or others'.

[33] The supporters of this theory include: Crenshaw, *Education in Ancient Israel*; Whybray, *The Intellectual Tradition in the Old Testament*; and Estes, *Hear, My Son*. These scholars use the evidence found in the Ancient Near East to support their theories.

[34] Since the internal or scriptural evidence is scant, Crenshaw, one of the school–origin–theory supporters, has to admit that "the evidence for education in ancient Israel is largely *inferential*" (italics mine). Crenshaw, *Education in Ancient Israel*, viii. Besides, the Ancient–Near–East documents which the

young (Prov 1:2–6) but the rhetoric employed in every part of the text is based on fatherhood rather than teacherhood.[35] In other words, a father can play the role of an educator and give his teaching; but a teacher is not normally also one's father, and a teacher's ethos cannot fit into the meaning of the text (e.g., 4:3–9).

The issue of ethos leads to the question whether there is a consistent rhetoric of speaker between the fatherly discourses (Prov 1–7) and the wisdom speeches (Prov 8–9). Or more precisely, can there be the same or similar ethos between Prov 1–7 and 8–9?[36] The assumptions of treating King Solomon and teacher as the chief speaker do not satisfy a reasonable reading of Prov 1–9, that is, to satisfy a requirement of the unifying rhetoric that can be identified in Prov 1–7 and carried on in Prov 8–9.

Let this investigation turn now to a more fruitful approach, examining the father's ethos in terms of motivation, authority, and persuasive expressions.

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school–origin–theory uses to affirm the existence of a school were created and nurtured in the polytheistic cultures; they cannot be arbitrarily applied to monotheistic Israel. As Milton P. Horne points out, "It is perfectly plausible that the preservation of such existed long before they (Proverbs) were written. The universal character of proverbial tradition makes Israelite wisdom's setting within *family* contexts entirely plausible.... The instructions opening with 'my child' in Proverbs 1–9 certainly betray that *familial ethos*. Likewise, sayings that suggest the importance of the authority of parents, and heeding their instruction, also suggest the concerns of the family and tribe (e.g. Prov 10:1; 15:20; 20:20; 23:22; 30:11, 17)." Horne, *Proverbs–Ecclesiastes* (italics mine), 10.

[35] The intimacy of a father can strongly prove the existence of this fatherhood. This speaking father demonstrates his close relationship with the listener when he says אָבִיךָ ("*your father*," Prov 1:8; 6:20) to the listener. The first–person address "my son" in Prov 1:8; 2:1; 3:1; 3:21; 4:1, 10, 20; 5:1; 6:20; 7:1 and the first–person descriptions around this intimate address (e.g. *my* words and *my* commandants in Prov 2:1, cf. 3:1; 4:4, 10, 20; 5:1, 7; 6:20; 7:1) support this fatherhood as well. The mnemonic saying (Prov 4:1–4) which the father recalls receiving from his father's instruction (the listener's grandfather's) does show the familial intimacy of fatherhood rather than teacherhood.

[36] Sandoval recognizes the existence of a unique ethos in Prov 1–9 and indicates: "The character of this scribal caste would have been shaped, too, by the diversity of its particular members' participation in, and access to, other cultural and social formations—e.g., powerful or impotent families and clans, the cult, prophetic groups, etc. The fusion of all these elements would have shaped a *unique* scribal ethos or culture, and it is this ethos and social context that is reflected in complex ways in the pages of Proverbs." Sandoval, *The Discourse of Wealth and Poverty in the Book of Proverbs*, 41 (italics mine). But what is this unique ethos? Can there be the same or a similar ethos in Prov 1–7 and 8–9?

Motivation

This section demonstrates how the motivation of the speaker's ethos works

consistently in Prov 1–7 as well as in Prov 8–9. In the text of Prov 1–9, the descriptions

of motivation usually appear in the exordia of discourse, following the vocatives and

volitional verbs. Here are some examples.

Table 21. List of Motivational Descriptions in Discourses[37]

Motivational Descriptions in Prov 1–7		
Discourses	Vocative + Volitional Verb	Motivation Description
First Fatherly Discourse	my son (vocative) + listen/do not forget (imperatives) (1:8)	For they (instruction and law) will be a graceful garland on your neck. (1:9)
Third Fatherly Discourse	my son (vocative) + do not forget/keep (jussives) (3:1)	For length of days and years of life and peace will add to you. (3:2)
Seventh Fatherly Discourse	My son (vocative) + heed/ incline (ear) (imperatives) (5:1)	That you may preserve discretion; your lips may keep knowledge (5:2)
Tenth Fatherly Discourse	My son (vocative) + keep/ live/bind/say (imperatives) (7:1–4)	That they (my words, my commands, my law, wisdom) may keep you from the strange woman, from the foreign woman with her smooth words. (7:5)
Motivational Descriptions in Prov 8–9		
Wisdom Speech in Prov 8	Men/You Simple Ones /You Fools (vocatives) + understand/listen (imperatives) (8:4–6)	For my mouth will speak truth; wickedness is an abomination to my lips. All the words of my mouth are with righteousness; nothing crooked or perverse is in them. (8:7–8)
	Sons (vocative) + listen (imperative) (8:32a)	For blessed are those who keep my ways. (8:32b)
Wisdom Speech in Prov 9	The simple ones (vocative) + turn (jussive)/come/eat /drink /forsake/live/go straight (imperatives) (9:4–6)	The fear of Yahweh is the beginning of wisdom, and the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding. For by me your days will be multiplied, and years of life will be added to you. (9:10–12)
	The simple ones	But he does not know that the dead are

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[37] There are other motivation descriptions following the same pattern such as Prov 3:11–12 (4th fatherly discourse), 21–23, 4:1–2 (the fatherly interlude), 10–11 (5th fatherly discourse), 20–22 (6th fatherly discourse), 6:20–24 (9th fatherly discourses).

	(vocative) + turn (jussive) (9:16a)	there; her guests are in the depths of Sheol. (9:18)

In the block of Prov 1–7, if the son listens to the father, he will receive grace (1:9),

long life and peace (3:2), good teaching (4:2), discretion and knowledge (5:2), safety in

the path of life (3:23; 4:11), life and health (4:22), and in particular, will be protected

from the harm of the adulteress (6:24; 7:5). In the block of Prov 8–9, if the listener listens

to Lady Wisdom, he will receive truth (8:7), righteousness (8:8), understanding and

knowledge (8:9, 10; 9:10), instruction (8:10), long life (9:11), and will be protected from

Dame Folly (9:16–18). Except for the difference of direct expression [through the father]

v.s. indirect expression [through Lady Wisdom], there is no difference concerning the

ethos of motivation in these chapters. In fact, the idea of wisdom epitomizes all of these

motivation descriptions and makes the development of the ethos reach the climax in Prov

8–9.[38]

The educational purpose functions similarly through the motivation of the ethos in

both Prov 1–7 and 8–9. The father uses demands (volitional verbs) to appeal to the

conscience of the son so that the son will anticipate the motivation and obey the

demand.[39] Either through direct demands (Prov 1–7) or in an indirect manner (Prov 8–9),

the motivation of the ethos plays the same or similar role in education as Philip J. Nel

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[38] In the block of Prov 1–7, the father encourages the son to get and cherish wisdom (2:5–11; 3:13–20; 4:7–9), making wisdom the only source of all good. In the block of Prov 8–9, wisdom becomes personified, declaring that "by me" all good will be given (8:12–21; 9:10–11). The development of the ethos reveals the emphasis of wisdom through the rhetorical skill of personification in Prov 8–9, thus creating a climax in Prov 1–9.

[39] Philip J. Nel provides his explanation for this: "In the admonitions (Prov 1–9) the truth (ethos) of experienced reality are combined with specific demands, which actualize that ethos in prescriptions to the individual. The >>general<< ethos (also expressed in wisdom sayings) is now made relevant to the conscience of specific persons (pupils, sons, court officials, etc.) For this very reason the admonition always anticipates the motivation which must make clear why it is so essential to obey the demand." Nel, *The Structure and Ethos of the Wisdom Admonitions of the Wisdom Admonitions in Proverbs*, 76.

indicates:

> The question thus arises, why is the admonition always followed by a motivation? The popular answer is invariably for didactic purposes. It is well true that the motivative clause might be of importance in an educational situation as a means for effective explanation. It appeals to comprehensibility. It elucidates, declares and makes the experienced truth relevant in its direct admonitory character. In this sense it helps the listener to discover the truth and worth of instruction. Thus, it is indeed a valid didactic instrument![40]

The ultimate motivation description that appears in the ethos of both Prov 1–7 and 8–9 is concerning Yahweh's created order and the knowledge of God. Walter C. Kaiser points out:

> The motivational clauses also reveal the ethos for admonitions in Proverbs. That ethos is Yahweh's created order and the knowledge of God that is directed by the יְרְאַת יְהוָה ("the fear of the LORD") (Job 28:2; Prov 1:7; 9:10; 15:33). The object of right living is to live in harmony with the created order and the knowledge of God. Only then will fullness, wholeness, success, and avoidance of tragedy be ours—both physically, materially, psychologically, and spiritually. For Proverbs to name one aspect, such as material success, is to invite success in every other area as well for life may not be fractured and neatly partitioned as it is currently fashionable to do in the West. The law promotes the same order that creation initiated and wisdom illuminated. Thus the ethos of the orders of the creation is the ethos of the law and both form the ethos of wisdom.[41]

Nel supports Kaiser's opinion and says that "The admonition demands orderly human conduct and the connected motivation reflects the experiences of inherent natural laws. This wisdom not only includes the perception of the logical consequences, but also, inevitably, confrontation, because this wisdom is knowledge of the created order and

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[40] Ibid., 85. Nel also indicates: "But, it could not be proven that the motivation was indeed a later addition to the admonition as a result of its functioning in school–context. On the contrary we found that the admonition and motivation co–exist from the very beginning, this assumption forces us to look, quite apart from its didactic function, at the inherent constitutive logic which determines the coherence. Hence again we are confronted with the impossibility of separating form and content in an atomistic manner." Ibid., 85–6. Nel's opinion makes clear that the consistency of the ethos/motivation is an evidence of the continuity and unity in Prov 1–9.

[41] Walter C. Kaiser, *Toward Old Testament Ethics* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zonderven, 1991), 304.

therefore of God himself."[42] In both Prov 1–7 and 8–9, the ultimate motivation of the ethos is no different in nature (see 1:7, 29; 2:5–6; 3:5–12, 19–20, 26, 32–33; 5:21; 6:16; 8:13, 22–31, 35; 9:10).

The issue of motivation illustrates the consistency/continuity of the will of the father. If the father's rhetoric is appropriately recognized and analyzed, then the ethos of the father creates a consistent path through the reading of Prov 1–7 into Prov 8–9. Therefore the entire text of Prov 1–9 is seen as a whole on account of the consistent ethos.

Authority

This section discusses how the authority used by the father demonstrates the consistent father's ethos in both Prov 1–7 and 8–9. The issue of authority concerns itself with the question of who the speaker is. When the speaker gives his discourse, what is his appeal to the listener through his character and credibility? In both Prov 1–7 and 8–9 the issue of authority revolves around the knowledge of tradition, fatherhood, and divine connection regarding the speaker's authority.

First, the speaker has the knowledge of tradition, therefore he has the authority to teach his son. In the father's discourses as well as wisdom's discourses of Prov 1–9, the speaker "is not claiming for himself power by virtue of his position over the learner (the son). Instead, he is qualified to speak with authority because of his status as a knowledgeable and reliable transmitter of tradition."[43] B. Lang asserts that "It is the

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[42] Nel, *The Structure and Ethos of the Wisdom Admonitions of the Wisdom Admonitions in Proverbs*, 86.

[43] Estes, *Hear, My Son*, 126. Estes also explains that the speaker "can speak with authority, because his superior knowledge of wisdom establishes his reliability. He does not claim authority on the basis of his position, but his authority is derived from his expert knowledge of the tradition which he transmits to the learner." Ibid., 127.

tradition, and nothing else, that is being passed therefore, does not really, even though the teacher (the father) speaks emphatically in the first person. The voice of the teacher (the father) is the voice of tradition and thus, in a sense, beyond individuality."[44] Therefore the father directly speaks to the son in Prov 1–7 and in the same tradition, the father indirectly speaks to the son through Lady Wisdom in Prov 8–9. This is how the ethos of the father is carried on in Prov 1–9.

Second, fatherhood emphasizes the authority which the son must obey in the family. Crenshaw asserts:

> The family was the most important institution in ancient Israel. Here values were acquired and character was lovingly shaped. Respect for parents, obedience of their every command, and caring for them in old age functioned as cement to hold a complex society together. Discipline, freely rendered, signified the importance of learning and learner alike; a father disciplines those he loves.[45]

In the setting of the family, "so long as wisdom represented human achievement, the authority conveyed to counsel and sapiential reflection lacked divine backing. This does not imply that the sages' observations had no authority, for they carried the weight of parental standing and compelled assent through logical cogency. When patriarchs spoke, children usually listened."[46] "The father makes demands, not suggestions."[47] This aspect

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[44] Lang, *Wisdom and the Book of Proverbs*, 37 (parenthesis mine).

[45] Crenshaw, *Old Testament Wisdom*, 13. Crenshaw provides a further explanation: "in such a closed social structure, brothers played a significant role. Any act that threatened fraternal peace was anathema. At the same time, the sages knew that friends could be closer than brothers. This perception prompted them to view every true friend as potential brother or sister in difficult times. The chief threat to the family was sexual (cf. the warning message against the adulteress in Prov 5:1–23; 6:20–35; 7:1–27); the adulterer was loathsome because of the complete disregard for family solidarity." Ibid (parenthesis mine). Approaching the setting of the fatherly discourses in Prov 1–9, Murphy also indicates: "The admonition suggests family origins, where parental authority is invoked." Roland E. Murphy, *Wisdom Literature: Job, Proverbs, Ruth, Canticles, Ecclesiastes, and Esther* (FOTL 13; Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1981), 55.

[46] Ibid., 12.

[47] Fox, *Proverbs 1–9*, 349. Fox also explains the authority of fatherhood in Prov 1–9 this way: "He (the father) intones exhortations and injunctions with magisterial certitude, demanding attention and obedience. He is not holding out options; the only alternative to Wisdom's way, which is also his way, is

of the ethos appears through the fatherly direct instructions (the fatherly discourses) in

Prov 1–7, and continues when the father introduces Lady Wisdom (8:1–3; 9:1–3) in Prov

8–9.

Third, the divine connection of wisdom associates the father's teachings with a

higher authority. Approaching how the wisdom of this world relates to a transcendent

authority, R. E. Clements explains:

> That one should adhere to these rules, and believe that this order of the world
> was ultimately beneficent, required invoking belief in the mind a beneficent
> purpose of a Creator. The pursuit of wisdom could only be justified by
> making an appeal to a transcendent authority.[48]

The description of the creation of Yahweh that occurs in the block of Prov 1–7 (3:19–20)

as well as in the block of Prov 8–9 (8:22–31) connects wisdom with the Creator. The idea

of wisdom must not be confined within the human world; its value must be viewed on a

divine level. Leo G. Perdue asserts:

> The faith of the sages in Proverbs 1–9 is expressed in a theology of creation.
> Drawing on a rich variety of creation myths and their root metaphors, the
> sages depicted God as the creator of heaven and earth, who used wisdom to
> create and then to continue to sustain the world. Creation was not a once–for–
> all event locked in the primordial past, but rather a continuous action.[49]

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the road to death. Though his teachings can be considered counsels (though not called *'esot* in these
chapters), obedience to them is not optional, for they are also *miswot*, which are commandments or
authoritative precepts, not elective counsels. The authority behind these precepts is not that of law or divine
command, and it has no sanctions to enforce it. It is the authority of *ethos*, the credibility of the speaker's
character and his affinity to the audience. This authority derives from the speaker's paternal position and
his role as the trident of ancient teachings." (italics Fox's) Ibid.

[48] Ronald E. Clements, *Wisdom in Theology* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1992), 115. Based on
transcendent authority, "in a concern with matters of health and politics, wisdom pressed towards a truly
universalist understanding of human needs and obligations. Inevitably therefore wisdom was concerned
with all aspect human relationships and with the defining of a concept of virtue. The fact that it came to do
so in terms of a religious commitment–"the fear of the Lord"–is highly significant. It recognised that
without this submission to a concept of transcendence–of another–worldly Reality–the very groundwork of
wisdom was defective." Ibid.

[49] Leo G. Perdue, *Wisdom & Creation: The Theology of Wisdom Literature* (Nashville, Tenn.:
Abingdon, 1994), 79. Perdue explains the importance of the creational description in Prov 1–9 this way:
"The sages in Proverbs used four metaphors to describe world origins and maintenance: word, artistry,
fertility, and battle or struggle. Thus God issues an edit to the primordial deep, keeping it from

The creational descriptions show that the father keeps on ascribing appealing the wisdom of human life to the Creator. There is the same ethos in Prov 1–7 from Prov 8–9. The listener respects the father's authority in the light of a divine/higher level. To create the effect of emphasis, the divine/higher viewpoint reveals the climax (Prov 8) for the entire series of instruction in Prov 1–9.

Above all, the issue of authority shows a consistent ethos in Prov 1–9 with regards to knowledge of tradition, fatherhood and divine connection. Only the familial setting, where the messages of Prov 1–9 were formed and nurtured, can reveal the value of this issue. The listener must listen and obey when the speaker speaks/commands as his father. Although the father speaks through Lady Wisdom in an indirect manner (Prov 8–9), the ethos revealed in the direct instruction (Prov 1–7) carries the same speaker's authority.

Persuasive Expressions

This section discusses how consistent the persuasive expressions are in both Prov 1–7 and 8–9. The knowledge of ethos concerning the persuasive expressions illuminates the inside world of the speaker because "this knowledge enables the speaker to project a favorable self–image and to shape arguments in ways that accommodate differing audiences and occasions."[50] There are three types of persuasive expression, namely the demonstrative, deliberative and judicial types, to illustrate the consistency of the ethos in Prov 1–9.

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overwhelming the created order (Prov 8:29). Or the creator is the divine architect who designs and constructs the cosmos in the form of an elegant and well–planned building or city (Prov 3:19–20; 8:26–29). In Proverbs 1 and 8, the world is a city where Woman Wisdom enters the gates, walks along the walls, and issues in the marketplace her invitation to life. In 9:1–6 Woman Wisdom constructs her seven–pillared house, initiating her worship by an invitation to the unlearned to come and partake of her festival of life. And in her hymn of self–praise (Prov 8:22–31), Woman Wisdom speaks of being 'fathered by God (*qānâ*) and 'begotten' (*hûl*) as the first of the divine acts of creation." Ibid.

[50] James S. Baumlin, "Ethos," in *ER*, 263.

Demonstrative Type

The demonstrative/epideictic type of expression shows a consistency between Prov 1–7 and 8–9. Demonstrative rhetoric, focusing on adulation in the present time, moves the listener to praise. The father uses a demonstrative expression to introduce wisdom to his son by praising wisdom (personified Wisdom) in the third person in Prov 3:13–20 (Prov 1–7).[51] The father uses the "better than" formula[52] to reinforce the son's understanding of the value of wisdom:

> Her (wisdom's) gain is *better than* silver; (3:14a);
>> *Better than* the gain of fine gold. (3:14b)
> She (wisdom) is *more* precious *than* rubies; (3:15a)
>> All that you desire cannot compare with her. (3:15b)

This rhetorical skill illuminates that wisdom is the most important (3:15b). The adulation in Prov .3:13–18 accumulates all kinds of blessings such as long life (3:16a), riches and honor (3:16b), delightfulness (3:17a) and peace (3:17b) that can be possessed by the listener through wisdom.

The same type of demonstrative/epideictic expression also occurs in the block of Prov 8–9. In her first–person speech, Lady Wisdom declares that

> For wisdom is *better than* rubies; (8:11a)
>> And all one desires cannot compare with her. (8:11b)
> My (Lady Wisdom's) fruit is *better than* gold, even fine gold; (8:19a)
>> My product is *better than* choice silver. (8:19b)

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[51] Longman recognizes the function of the demonstrative/epideictic expression in the passage and asserts: "The poem of 3:13–20 pronounces a blessing on those who find wisdom. Wisdom is here personified as a woman. The bulk of the passage is a description of the qualities and benefits of wisdom, which serves as an explanation for why the person who finds wisdom is blessed. The purpose of such a poem is to encourage those who have not yet begun their quest for wisdom to begin it." Longman, *Proverbs*, 136.

[52] The "better than" formula (the adjective טוֹב followed by the preposition מֶן), according to Waltke and O'Connor, "may indicate a positive comparison, where in both the subject and thing compared possess the quality expressed by the adjective, with the subject possessing it to a greater degree." Waltke and O'Connor, *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, 264. The "better than" formula is common in Prov 1–9 (also see 8:11, 19; and cf. 12:9; 15:16–17; 16:8, 16, 19, 32; 17:1; 19:1, 22; 21:9, 19; 25:7, 24; 27:5, 10; 28:6).

The "better than" formula appears again. Lady Wisdom promises to give the accumulated blessings, like counsel and sound wisdom (8:14a), understanding and strength (8:14b), riches and honor (8:18a), enduring riches and righteousness (8:18b), life (8:35a) and favor from Yahweh (8:35b). The same demonstrative expression in Prov 1–7 (3:13–20) is found in Prov 8–9 (8:6–21); yet this demonstrative expression is intensified to reach a climax in Prov 8.

Deliberative Type

The deliberative/hortatory type of expression which the father uses to demonstrate the consequence of a choice (future) also supports the unity and consistency of Prov 1–7 and 8–9. It is a demand of choice–making in Prov 1–7 which the father asked the son to obey in the fatherly discourses (1:8; 2:1–5; 3:1, 21; 4:1, 10–13, 20–21; 5:1–2; 6:20–21; 7:1–4). And the choice is about the listener's fate in life (3:2, 16–18, 22; 4:4, 10, 13; 6:23; 7:2) or death (2:18–19; 5:5, 11–14, 23; 7:22–23, 26–27). In the block of Prov 8–9 the images of the two banquets provided by Lady Wisdom and Dame Folly (9:3–5, 16–17) provide the two choices that will lead to two different consequences, life or death (9:6, 18). Indeed, the consequences will not happen until a choice is made. The ethos of the speaker becomes stronger as the deliberative rhetoric is laid out in this contrasting manner.

A similar deliberative expression occurs with regard to the description of death in both Prov 1–7 and 8–9. In order to create the effect of warning in Prov 1–7, the two fourfold/metaphorical descriptions of death (7:22–23, 26–27) bring in the extremity of anti–wisdom in the final statement of the ten fatherly discourses (1:8–7:27). Both of the two fourfold/metaphorical description of death focus on the deadly results for the victim,

but the first one (7:22–23) uses the victim as the subject, and the second one (7:26–27) presents the adulteress as the subject. Here is the first fourfold structure:

> He–goes after–her immediately; (7:22a)
> As–an–ox goes to–a–slaughter; (7:22b)
> As–fetter(s) (is) to–the–correction of–a–fool. (7:22c)[53]
> Till pierces an–arrow (through) his–liver; (7:23a)
> As–hastens a–bird to–a–snare; (7:23b)
> Even–he does–not–know that–for–his–life it (is). (7:23c)

This fourfold structure is chiastic in its deliberative expression. The cause (namely the victim's following the adulteress) is provided in the beginning (v. 22a), and the result (namely his forfeiting life) closes the whole set at the end (v. 23c). In the middle, the fourfold metaphorical descriptions concerning death (an ox→a slaughter; fetter[s]→a fool; an arrow→the victim' liver; a bird→a snare) make the deliberative expression more persuasive to the listener. The concentric structure moves from the outside *zoological* pair (v. 22b // v. 23b, namely ox//bird, to go//to hasten, a slaughter//a snare) to the inside *human* pair (fetter[an instrument for death]//arrow[an instrument for death], a fool [victim himself] //victim's liver [victim himself]). The ethos artfully demonstrates that the victim is doomed to death as soon as he follows the adulteress.

The second fourfold pair appears at the ending of the tenth fatherly discourse (7:26–27). Compared to the metaphorical skill in the first fourfold pair (7:22–23), this pair

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[53] The ambiguity of this cola (7:22c) easily causes different understandings. Murphy considers that "the text is corrupt." Murphy, *Proverbs*, 42. The MT text may read as this translation (see also the translation in KJV, ASV, NAS, NKJ, ASU, and Longman's translation). See Longman, *Proverbs*, 191. However, the LXX (also Syr. and Targ.) witnesses the reading "as a dog to bonds (reading *môsēd*, not *mûsar*) and as a hart (reading *keʾayyāl*, not *ʾewîl*)." The Vulgate also has the reading "as a lamb playing wanton and ignorant he is being led like a fool to bounds." Therefore some modern scholars or translations re–read this cola as "as a stag stepping or led into a noose/snare." See NIV, RSV, NRS, and Waltke, *The Book of Proverbs: Chapters 1–15*, 365; Fox, *Proverbs 1–9*, 238. In fact, those understandings of 7:22c (e.g., the translations following the LXX) depend on the presupposition that v. 22c must be in parallel with v. 22b (e.g., ox//hart). but this assumption ignores the parallel pair made by v. 22b and v. 22c (fetter//arrow, a fool [namely the victim]//his liver [namely the victim]) and the other pair by v. 22b and v. 23b (ox//bird, to go//to hasten, to a slaughter//to a snare).

becomes stronger and more vivid in assuring the listener that death is the only result for

the adulteress's victim. The rhetorical structure of the fourfold description is as follows:

> Because–many slain–ones she–has–made–low; (7:26a)
> Even–mighty–men all–were–slain–by–her. (7:26b)
> The–ways to–Sheol (are) her–house; (7:27a)
> Going–down to–the–chamber–of–death. (7:27b)

These four cola of the deliberative expression are employed for the purpose of ending

both the series of messages about the adulteress [54] and the entire group of fatherly

discourses in Prov 1–7. The first two cola (7:26a, 26b) form the parallelism of

inclusiveness on the result of death.[55] And the two remaining cola (7:27a, 27b) present the

parallelism of destiny on the result of death, using the same concept of location (the

adulteress' house→Sheol//the–chamber–of–death).[56] With the help of these two

parallelisms, the deliberative description of death makes the ethos extraordinarily

impressive to the listener.

The block of Prov 8–9 also presents the deliberative expression of death at the

endings of the speeches and continues the similar ethos in Prov 1–7. The father's rhetoric

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[54] Horne considers that there are the series of four instructions concerning adultery in Prov 1–9 (namely the sections in 2:16–19; 5:1–14; 6:20–35; 7:1–27), and indicates: "Proverbs 7 contains the tenth and final instruction (fatherly discourse) in the series within Proverbs 1–9. This is the fourth of the instructions on adultery (cf. 2:16–19; 5:1–14; 6:20–35.) A concluding reflection occurs in the poem in 9:13–18. Of the four instructions, this one certainly offers the most elaborate narrative description of the ways of the adulteress (vv. 6–23). It may be read as the *climactic* statement of the four admonitions, punctuating the previous warnings with the most provocative detail of the process of seduction." Horne, *Proverbs–Ecclesiastes*, 115 (italics mine). This fourfold ending of death becomes very impressive in the hearing of the listener when the entire series on the adulteress comes to an end. The ending seems to express that there is no any way out but death if the listener becomes a victim of the adulteress.

[55] This "parallelism of inclusiveness on the result of death" shows the parallelism in these two cola (many–slain–ones//might–men; she–has–made–low//all–were–slain–by–her), and particularly expresses that the result of death is *inclusive* of all men no matter how many (v. 26a) or strong (v. 26b) they are. The skill rhetorically highlights the inevitability of death for the adulteress' victim.

[56] The "parallelism of destiny on the result of death" uses the equivalence of space to develop its logic. The adulteress' house (space/location) is the cause to bring in the result of death so that her house is equivalent to Sheol and the chamber of death. In other words, as long as the listener stays in her house, death will be an inevitable destiny.

sets two double–fold deliberative expressions of death at both endings of Prov 8 (8:36a,

36b) and 9 (9:18a, 18b) so that the metaphorical figures (Lady Wisdom and Dame Folly)

may remind the listener of the danger caused by evil. The first double deliberative

expression of death is as follows:

> For he–who–finds–me finds life; (8:35a);
> And–obtains favor from–Yahweh. (8:35b)
> But–he–who–misses–me does–violence–to his–life; (8:36a);
> All–those–hate–me love death. (8:36b)

The double–fold expression of death (doing–violence–to–one's–life [8:36a] +

loving–death [8:36b]) presents the ending of the Lady Wisdom's peroration (8:32–36) in

Prov 8. The deliberative persuasion makes the decision of the listener more pressing

when Lady Wisdom completes the speech and asks the listener to obey.[57] The listener

must choose to find (8:35a) or miss (8:36a) Lady Wisdom, and the result of his decision

is life (8:35ab) or death (8:36ab). The ethos makes the intensity which is caused by

choosing (between life [good] and death [evil]), continue into Prov 9.

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[57] In the peroration of Lady Wisdom in Prov 8, Lady Wisdom urges the listener(s) to listen (obey) by
the two emphatic phrases: "וְעַתָּה בָנִים שִׁמְעוּ־לִי" ("Therefore, now sons, listen to me!") and "אָדָם שֹׁמֵעַ לִי
אַשְׁרֵי"("Blessed are the men who listen to me!"). Then a decision must be made by the listener(s). In an
acute sense, the double–fold deliberative expression of death demonstrates that the listener's decision could
be serious. Waltke approaches the verse (8:36) this way: "But (wᵉ) sets up the high stakes of finding or
missing Wisdom. *The one who misses me* (hōṭᵉʾî; see 1:10) invests *hāṭā* in the *Qal* with its original sense,
because it stands in opposition to 'find' (cf. Job 5:24; Isa 65:20). If one finds Wisdom by vigilance, then
one lacking it misses her. This sort of person is one who does violence (hōmēs; see 3:31) *against himself*
(napšô). Verset B escalates the singular 'whoever' to the plural *all* (kol–), the outward objective behavior
of missing wisdom to the emotional state behind it, namely, *hate me* (meśanʾay; see 1:22) and their
perverse psychology, *love* [see 1:22; 8:17] *death* (māwet; see 2:18; 5:5; 7:27), the climatic word of the
address." Waltke, *The Book of Proverbs: Chapters 1–15*, 426 (all italics and parentheses Waltke's). Here
Waltke observes the acuteness /seriousness of the passage in the listener's decision–making, and also
connects the deliberative expression of death with the other similar expressions in the ending of Prov 7
(7:27, see the verse quote in the parenthesis). Fox doesn't recognize the continuity of the father's rhetoric in
his Interlude D (8:1–36) and approaches the passage (8:32–36) this way: "Like an exordium, Interlude D
aims to move the reader to listen to and obey wisdom. In this case, however, the object of attention is not
the father's teachings but wisdom generally, or wisdom in and of itself." Fox, *Proverbs 1–9*, 292. However,
Fox does not recognize the ethos in Prov 1–9 and the similarity/continuity at the endings of both Prov 1–7
(7:26–27) and 8–9 (8:36; 9:18), so he doesn't accept the existence of the father's teaching/rhetoric.

The second double–fold deliberative expression of death appears at the ending

(9:18) of Prov 9 and continues the ethos in Prov 1–8 (Prov 1–7 [7:26–27] plus Prov 8

[8:36]). The following expressions are demonstrated in Prov 9:17–18:

> Stolen–water is–sweet; (9:17a)
>> And–bread (eaten) in–secret is–pleasant. (9:17b)
> But–he–does–not–know that–dead–ones (are) there; (9:18a)
>> In–the–depths of–Sheol her–guests (are). (9:18b)

This double–fold expression (dead–ones–are–there [9:18a] + her–guests–are–in–the–

depths–of–Sheol [9:18b]) shows the result (death) of the listener's ignorant choosing if he

accepts the invitation of Dame Folly (9:16–17). In the whole picture (9:13–18), Dame

Folly hosts a banquet providing the alluring but illegal supplies (food and drink) and

invites the listener to join her party. However, what the listener does not know, but the

speaker (the father) knows well, is the result of such ignorant choosing, namely death.[58]

The ethos is carried out by the metaphorical figure (Dame Folly) in a metaphorical

situation (the house full of dead people [9:18a] and the depths of Sheol [9:18b]),

reminding the listener to make a wiser choice. This indirect/metaphorical manner is

similar to the ending of the death expression (7:26–27) in Prov 7. Therefore this evidence

assists in showing the continuity of the ethos between Prov 1–7 and 8–9.

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[58] Waltke considers the deliberative expression of death as the conclusion for the passage of Prov 9:13–18 and indicates: "The sage now corrects her deceptive half–turn with a but (w^e). Behind the scene of sensual delight is a scene of the dead (v. 18a) in the depths of the grave (v. 18b). *He does not know that* ($lō$ '$yāda$'; see 4:19; 9:13) expresses the fundamental flaw of Folly (see v. 13) and her adherent: they neither know nor care about the consequences of their action. They are willfully oblivious to Wisdom's fundamental insight that the ethical God upholds a moral order wherein he rewards righteousness with life, and wickedness, such as stealing and adultery, with death. *The dead* ($r^e$$pā$'$îm$; see 2:18) *are there* ($šām$; see 8:27) refers to the corpses in her 'festive' house (see 9:13–14). Those she invited ($q^e$$ru$'$eyhā$; see 'call out' in v. 3) refers to the apostates who followed her siren invitation (v. 18). Whereas they had made their way straight, leading to life, they now find themselves turned aside and *in the depths* (b^e'$imqê$; see 25:3) *of the grave* ($še$'$ôl$). "Many 'eat' on earth what 'digest' in hell." With this stern warning the sage draws the curtain on the prologue, hoping to provoke the uncommitted to choose the life he offers in the collections that follow." Waltke, *The Book of Proverbs Chapters 1–15*, 446 (all italics and parentheses Waltke's). According to Waltke, the deliberative expression of death shows relevance/continuity with the previous section (Prov 1–8) (see his verse quotes).

Judicial Type

The judicial/forensic type of expression that focuses on right decisions/judgments in past events carries on the consistency/continuity of the ethos from Prov 1–7 into 8–9. Although there is not much judicial expression concerning the past in Prov 1–9, the ethical/moral perspective of the speaker flows out of the limited passages that do exist. In the tenth fatherly discourse (Prov 7:6–27), the father recalls a scene in which a young victim falls into the trap of the seductress (the adulteress). This *past* event happened when the father "looked out" through his lattice and played the moral judge (v. 6). This scene shows that the seduction was so irresistible that the young man yielded, causing his final tragedy. The authority of the father has judged the seductive woman as "a harlot," "wily of heart" (v. 10). Moreover, the logos (the logical argument) cannot be clearer concerning the same evil motivation of religious activity (v. 14), intimate deed (v. 13), and the well–prepared plan (vv. 16–20). The only pathos that the speaking father expects from his son is a firm resistance to the seduction; otherwise, the consequences to the young victim are unavoidable (vv. 21–23).

The same judicial type of expression also takes place in Prov 9. In Prov 9:13–18, clamorous Dame Folly, the contrast to Lady Wisdom, "knew nothing" (v. 13) according to the speaker's ethos (moral judgment). She copies the calling of Lady Wisdom (vv. 15–16) and gives her own logos (v. 17) to the potential victims who might listen to her seduction. Nevertheless, the speaker's ethos declares the destructive consequences to the one who accepts the evil invitation of Dame Folly (v. 18). The pathos used by the father through Dame Folly's voice is so deplorable that it motivates a wise decision/judgment by the young listener. The only safe way of life is to listen to Lady Wisdom (vv. 1–6).

Accordingly, the judicial type of expression is close to the one used in the fatherly discourses (e.g., Prov 7:6–27) on a moral/ethical basis. This means a continuous ethos exists in both Prov 1–7 and 8–9.

The three persuasive types of expression (demonstrative/epideictic, deliberative/hortatory and judicial/forensic expressions) present the consistency/ continuity of the ethos between Prov 1–7 and 8–9. The father, the chief speaker, uses his rhetoric in these expressions to persuade the son, the listener. When the father speaks in the ten fatherly discourses (Prov 1–7), he instructs the son in a *direct* manner. When Lady Wisdom speaks in a discourse (Prov 8–9), the same father instructs the son in an *indirect* manner, but still with the same ethos. These persuasive expressions also create emphasis in the climactic section (the demonstrative expression of Lady Wisdom in Prov 8) as well as in the warning sections (the deliberative expression on death in Prov 7:26–27; 8:36; 9:18). As we have seen from the ethos, the rhetoric in Prov 8–9 derives from Prov 1–7. The rhetoric of these two blocks cannot be separated.

Summary

As this study has demonstrated, then, the discussions on motivation and authority show that the ethos of the father in Prov 1–7 still dominates in Prov 8–9. The persuasive expressions in demonstrative, deliberative and judicial types are also consistent between Prov 1–7 and 8–9, creating the emphatic sections in the climax (Prov 8) and in the warning endings (Prov 7:26–27; 8:36; 9:18). Although the speaker's manner changes from direct (the father speaks himself) to indirect (the father speaks through Lady Wisdom), all of the evidence on the ethos prove that the father's rhetoric in Prov 1–7 continues and climaxes in Prov 8–9.

Pathos of the Father's Rhetoric

This section focuses on the issue of pathos in Prov 1–9, investigating how the pathos in Prov 1–7 continues and creates a special emphasis in Prov 8–9. Pathos is an emotional appeal to the listener's/reader's heart in order to persuade, and "occurs as a mode of artistic proof when the minds of the audience are moved to emotion."[59] Evaluating the pathos of a speech involves recognizing who is the listener and what emotion a speech is seeking to arouse. This section assumes that the pathos of Prov 1–9 is chiefly associated with the son of the father speaker. Noticing the role of the single listener, Kathleen A. Farmer indicates:

> The first nine chapters of Proverbs contain relatively long, personalized, advice–giving speeches that are directly addressed to *a listener* who is called "my son" (NRSV "my child"). These speeches attempt to persuade the listener to act (or to avoid acting) in particular ways.[60]

It is imperative to investigate the areas of the listener's identity, the listener's learning and the listener's reaction when we consider pathos. These three areas show that the listener in Prov 1–9 is the same single person, also and demonstrate how the father's rhetoric provides continuity and unity in the text.

Listener's Identity

This investigation of the listener's identity examines who the listener is in light of the father's rhetoric. Indeed, whatever information we have concerning the listener is in these discourses/speeches in Prov 1–9, and comes from the speaker's oral perspective. Wilfred G. E. Watson points out:

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[59] Kennedy, *Classical Rhetoric & Its Christian and Secular Tradition from Ancient to Modern Times*, 82.

[60] Kathleen A. Farmer, "The Wisdom Books: Job, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes" in *The Hebrew Bible Today: An Introduction to Critical Issues* (ed. Steven L. McKenzie and M. Patrick Graham; Louisville, Ky.: John Knox, 1998), 131 (italics mine).

In an oral poetic tradition the audience–for whose benefit the poet recited–fulfilled a dual function, being at the same time catalysts for creativity, yet staunch preservers of tradition. The poet's role was to entertain; this he did by being spontaneous, creative and inventive, but always without going too far beyond the confines of tradition. [61]

Three perspectives, namely the inclusive implication in the prologue, the consistent use of the vocative and the portrayal of the listener illustrate how the pathos of the father's rhetoric in Prov 1–7 continues in Prov 8–9.

First, the inclusive implication in the prologue (1:2–6) proves that the listener to the fatherly discourses (Prov 1–7) is also the listener to Lady Wisdom (Prov 8–9). The author of Prov 1–9 provides the prologue, not only for the fatherly discourses, but also for the speeches of Lady Wisdom, pointing to the character of the listener to both. An analysis of the prologue is as follows.

Table 22. Prologue in Proverbs 1:2–6

Informative Description	v. 2	To–know wisdom and–instruction / to–discern speeches of–understanding
	v. 3	To–take instruction of–being–prudent / (to take) righteousness and–justice and–fairness
	v. 4	To–give to–the–simple prudence / to–young–man knowledge and–discretion
Commanding Description	v. 5	Let–listen wise–man and–increase learning / and–discerning–man guidance let–(him)–get
Informative Description	v. 6	To–discern proverb and–enigma / (to discern) the words of–wise and–their–riddles

The prologue introduces the purpose of Prov 1–9 (as well as the entire book of Proverbs), including the father's discourses (Prov 1–7) and the speeches of Lady Wisdom

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[61] Wilfred G. E. Watson, *Classical Hebrew Poetry: A Guide to Its Techniques* (JSOTSup 26, Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1984), 73. Watson provides a further explanation and says, "He had to keep his listeners amused, but could not afford to estrange them by introducing too much novelty. Part of his skill, therefore, lay in reacting correctly to the audience, and they, in their turn, acted as a stabilising influence on his performance. Naturally, the audience participated by joining in choruses and refrains, by clapping or stamping their feet, and even perhaps by asking direct questions." Watson's observation reminds that the role of the implied audience reflects the oral perspective of the poet or the speaker in Prov 1–9.

(Prov 8–9) without distinguishing the audiences of these two blocks as different. Noticing

the implied single listener, David Penchansky indicates: "Verses 2–6 express the purpose

of the book, explaining the results for *the diligent listener, the one* who obeys these

words, and what is to be gained from the study of wisdom."[62] According to the structure

of the prologue, most of the cola with the preposition לְ and the infinitives (v. 2a, 2b, 3a,

[3b], 4a, 6a, [6b] except v. 4b) express purpose by providing informative descriptions.

Only verse five asks the listener/reader for an action by using a commanding description

(with jussives). This special design is meant to provide guidance to the listener (the

speaker's son).[63] The pathos targets a singular/male listener,[64] who is the speaker's son

(see 1:8; 2:1; 3:1; 3:21; 4: 10, 20; 6:1; 5:1; 6:20; 7:1).

Second, the use of the vocatives ("my son" or "sons") in the text further supports

the consistency and continuity of the pathos used between Prov 1–7 and 8–9. The

intimate address to "my son" (or "sons") triggers the same pathos in the heart. The block

of Prov 1–9 has as many as 15 of the total 22 occurrences of the vocative בְּנִי ("my son")

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[62] David Penchansky, "Proverbs," in *Wisdom Writings* (MCB 3, ed. Watson E. Mills; Macon, Ga.: Mercer University Press, 2001), 197 (italics mine).

[63] Charles F. Melchert combines some scholars' opinions and provides his own insight concerning v. 5: "Roland Murphy claims that in Proverbs 1:5, 'The hermeneutical key to the entire work is given; all that follows is to provide guidance (or 'steering,' Hebrew: *tahbulot*).' Walther Zimmerli agrees: 'Wisdom is *per definitionem tahbuloth*, the "art of steering," knowledge of how to do in life.' The Tanakh translates the verse: 'the discerning men' will learn to be adroit' (1:5, NJPSV). What could be a more fitting description of the purpose of wisdom than learning to steer one's way adroitly through the task of reader–learners in approaching the texts." Charles F. Melchert, *Wise Teaching: Biblical Wisdom and Educational Ministry* (Harrisburg, Pa.: Trinity Press International, 1998), 58. Further more, he explains, "Learning to see the right way is necessary, but seeing it is not enough. The texts tell reader–learners what look for, how to recognize good and evil. Sometimes they tell the reader–learner *what to do* (which is the teacher–author's task), but more often they tell the reader *how to steer* (which is the learner's task). They make observations and invite or tease readers into drawing their own conclusions, to be practiced and tested in life experience, which learners must do for themselves." Ibid., 59. As Perdue explains why the prologue is designed this way and says, "This introduction serves as both a rationale and an invitation to pursue the study of wisdom." Perdue, *Proverbs*, 76.

[64] In verse five, the implied listener of Prov 1–9 is a "wise man" (חָכָם) and a "discerning man" (נָבוֹן). Both of the forms indicate a single male (the father's son).

in the Book of Proverbs. In order to appeal to a close relationship, the father prefers this

vocative with the first–person suffix, but sometimes he also employs the plural form בָּנִים

("sons") for an emphatic effect.[65] Although the vocative בְּנִי ("my son") never occurs in

Prov 8–9, there are several examples of this plural בָּנִים ("sons,"plural absolute in 8:32

and plural construct in 8:4, 31), which are also used by the father in his discourses (4:1;

5:7; 7:24). If the switch of vocatives (בְּנִי ["my son"] and בָּנִים ["sons"]) are for the

purpose of emphasis, and if the listener of these ten fatherly discourses is the speaker's

own son (my son/sons = the father's son), then the listener to the speeches of Lady

Wisdom (chapters 8–9) is the same, namely the son of the father.

In addition, the same reminding formula "וְעַתָּה בָנִים שִׁמְעוּ־לִי" ("And now, O sons,

listen to me") takes place in the fatherly discourses (5:7; 7:24) as well as in the speech of

Lady Wisdom (8:32). This demonstrates that the implied speaker (the father) still keeps

his speaking style as he speaks through Lady Wisdom and targets the same listener (sons

= my son) or an even wider audience.[66] The same pathos supports a

consistency/continuity between Prov 1–7 and 8–9.

Third, the portrayal of the listener is consistent throughout Prov 1–9. Claus

Westermann observes how the father impacts the son in the long exhortations

(discourses) of Prov 1–9 and asserts:

> The substantiations given in these sayings are virtually all pragmatic. The one
> exhorting draws attention to the consequences of a wrong action or wrong

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[65] The emphatic effect of the plural form includes: *causing* a great deal of attention, *extending* the range of the audience (the listener → the listener's brothers [even including the speaker himself] → all who hears or reads the instructions) and *indicating* the different voice (Lady Wisdom's voice).

[66] In fact, the plural vocative ("sons") can also mean that wisdom has many sons, including the father himself. Therefore the shift contains continuity and inclusiveness. In this model, the son can see that he can be like his father because when his father was young, he also learned from wisdom.

decision. The one being exhorted is thus taken seriously in terms of his own decision–making capability. In no case are motivations offered to the listener that could not, in fact, represent his own.[67]

In the ten fatherly discourses, the vocatives (my *son* or *sons*) indicate that the listener is *simple* and *young* in character (cf. פְּתָיִם [the simple] and נַעַר [the young] in 1:4); in fact, the discourses are full of the portrayal of an inexperienced listener. For example, the father indicates that inexperienced son might be easily seduced by the wicked men (1:10–19). In the tenth fatherly discourse (7:1–27), the father utilizes an anonymous man who is *simple* and *young* (7:7) to illustrate the destructive result of the seductress, and in the final part of the discourse, the father appears and warns the listener, "Let not your (the listener's) heart turn aside to her ways, do not stray into her paths" (7:25). The empathetic feeling (anonymous man → the listening son) that is roused in the son, who is also both simple and young, is meant to keep him from destructive seduction.

The pathos corresponding to this character (young and simple) asks for wisdom and successful life. In this regard, the father likes to use the demonstrative or epideictic rhetoric to move the audience's attention towards the *present* time. This type of rhetoric always focuses on the value of instruction or wisdom in the fatherly discourses of Prov 1–7. For example, the father encourages the son to take his instruction as it is "a fair garland for his head and pendants for his neck" (Prov 1:9), and to seek wisdom like "silver" and search for it as for "hidden treasures" (2:4).

In the wisdom speeches of Prov 8–9, the epideictic rhetoric describes Lady Wisdom to be more valuable than silver, choice gold and jewels (8:10). Counsel, strength, insight, power, riches and honor are in her control (8:14–18). Standing in the presence of

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[67] Westermann, *Roots of Wisdom*, 90.

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Yahweh, Lady Wisdom is the most valuable agent used by Yahweh in His creation (8:22–31). It is not difficult to see the audience of personified Wisdom portrayed as *young, simple* and even *foolish* in the wisdom speeches (1:22; 8:4–5; 9: 4, 6).[68]

This Wisdom appeals to a different kind of person–to–person relationship (I–Thou) so that the listener can be wise and prosperous in life. Why the change? The different kind of person–to–person appeal of personified Wisdom may be rhetorically stronger than a direct fatherly discourse because the listener is facing an unreal figure and this reduces the emotional pressure the father's direct presence would cause. In other words, this indirect I–Thou relationship may be even more persuasive if the listener is willing to listen and understand what is implied through the metaphorical language.

Listener's Learning

The consistency/continuity of the pathos between Prov 1–7 and 8–9 may be approached by examining the listener's potential for learning. Considering the listener in Prov 1–9 as a learner, Daniel J. Estes asserts:

> The prominent aspects of the learner are receiving, responding, valuing and assimilating. Through these attitudes and activities, the learner develops a *comprehensive* and *coherent* philosophy of life. It internalizes the values of wisdom as communicated through the guidance of the teacher (the father).[69]

These aspects are useful to comprehend how the pathos of the father's rhetoric works in the fatherly discourses (Prov 1–7) and extends its impact in Prov 8–9.

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[68] It is clear that the pathos (emotional reaction) of the listener is driven by the logos and ethos of the speaker in this father's rhetoric. The demonstrative/ epideictic type emphasizes the value of instruction or wisdom (or their synonyms), and its use in both sections underlines the fact that the father's rhetoric of Prov 1–7 continues into 8–9.

[69] Estes, *Hear, My Son*, 135 (italics and parentheses mine). As long as the issue of the pathos is concerned, Estes supports the continuity and unity in Prov 1–9 according to the comprehensive and coherent philosophy of life. He spends a whole section to discuss the role of the listener as a learner. And what he quotes from the text covers the block of Prov 1–7 and the block of Prov 8–9. See ibid., 135–149. That is, the so–called comprehensive and coherent philosophy of life proves the continuity and unity in Prov 1–7 and 8–9.

First, the listener's learning potential depends on how much he can *receive*. "The notion of the learner as a receiver in Proverbs 1–9 is communicated by several verbs, which are most frequently used in exhortations by the teacher (the father) to the learner (the son)."[70] The verbs, such as לָקַח ("to acquire" or "to get"),[71] קָשַׁב ("to harken"),[72] and שָׁמַע ("to listen"),[73] are used by the father to demand that the son *receive* his instruction. There is no difference here in the pathos expressed in Prov 1–7 and 8–9.

Second, the listener's potentiality in learning is decided by his attitude *responding* to wisdom. "In Proverbs 1–9 the role of the learner as a responder is communicated through both positive and negative commands."[74] For instance, the father demands, "My son, preserve sound judgment and discernment, do not let them out of your sight…"

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[70] Ibid. 136.

[71] Estes illustrates the verb לָקַח ("to acquire") with these cases in Prov 1–7: "…for acquiring [*lāqahat*] a disciplined and prudent life, doing what is right and just and fair…" (1:3); "My son, if you accept [*tiqqah*] my words and store up my commands within you…" (2:1); and "Listen, my son, accept [*wᵉqah*] what I say, and the years of your life will be many." (4:10) In the block of Prov 8–9, he provides the example: "Choose [*qehû*] my instruction instead of silver, knowledge rather than choice gold…" (8:10). See ibid., 136–7 (translation Estes's).

[72] In Prov 1–7 Estes uses these cases to explain the verb קָשַׁב ("to harken"): "…turning [*haqší*] your ear to wisdom and applying [*tatteh*] your heart to understanding." (קָשַׁב works with נָטָה)(2:2); "My son, pay attention [*haqšibâ*] to what I say; listen [*hat*] closely to my words." (קָשַׁב works with נָטָה) (4:20); "My son, pay attention [*haqšibâ*] to my wisdom, listen [*hat*] well to my words of insight…" (קָשַׁב works with נָטָה)(5:1); "Now then, my sons, listen to me; pay attention [*haqšibû*] to what I say." (7:24). See ibid., 138–9 (translation Estes's).

[73] In Prov 1–7 Estes uses these cases to explain the verb שָׁמַע: "…let the wise listen [*yišma'*] and add to their learning, and let the discerning get guidance." (1:5); "Listen [*šᵉma'*], my son, to your father's instruction and do not forsake your mother's teaching." (1:8); "…but whoever listens [*šōmē'*] to me will live in safety and be at ease, without fear of harm." (1:33); "Listen [*šim'û*], my sons, to a father's instruction; pay attention and gain understanding." (4:1); "Listen [*šᵉma'*], my son, accept what I say, and the years of your life will be many." (4:10); "Now then, my sons, listen [*šim'û*] to me; do not turn aside from what I say." (5:7); "Now then, my sons, listen [*šim'û*] to me; pay attention to what I say." (7:24). In Prov 8–9 the verb שָׁמַע also plays significant role in the listener's learning as these cases show: "Listen [*šim'û*], for I have worthy things to say; I open my lips to speak what is right." (8:6); "Now then, my sons, listen [*šim'û*] to me; blessed are those who keep my ways. Listen [*šim'û*] to my instruction and be wise; do not ignore it. Blessed is the man who listens [*šōmēa'*] to me, watching daily at my doors, waiting at my doorway." (8:32–34) See ibid., 139–40 (translation Estes's).

[74] Ibid., 140.

(3:21). "For instruction to be effective, the learner must exert effort to retain what wisdom has taught."[75] In Prov 1–7, similar cases also take place in 3:27–28; 4:14–15; 5:7–8; 6:3–5, 20–21; 7:1–3. Lady Wisdom appears to ask for the same response from the listener in Prov 8–9 (see 8:4–21, 32–36; 9:4–6, 11–12). The very pathos that occurs in Prov 1–7 remains in Prov 8–9.

Third, the listener's learning potential depends on how he *values* wisdom. By valuing wisdom, "the learner attaches worth to the instruction he has been given, demonstrating a positive appreciation for it. Consequently, the learner's behaviour reflects 'the internalization of a set of specified values', which in the case of Prov 1–9 are the values of wisdom (cf. chapter 2)."[76] These kinds of descriptions appear in Prov 2:3–4; 4:4–8; and 8:17–21. Again, the consistency/coherence of the pathos is seen between Prov 1–7 and 8–9.

Fourth, the listener's learning potential is decided by how he *assimilates* wisdom in his life. Estes emphasizes:

> The capstone of the role of the learner in Proverbs 1–9 is the assimilation of wisdom as a *coherent* philosophy of life. As the learner develops a pattern of life organized around wisdom he achieves an internally consistent value system. All aspects of life are united by wisdom to form an *integrated* person living skillfully in Yahweh's ordered world.[77]

The commitment to Yahweh is decided by the listener's heart (לֵבָב/לֵב).[78] "Control of

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[75] Ibid.

[76] Ibid., 144. Estes uses Gronlund's theory to uphold his idea in this regard. See Norman E. Grondlund, *Stating Objectives for Classroom Instruction* (3rd ed.; New York: Macmillan, 1985), 38.

[77] Ibid., 147 (italics mine).

[78] K. A. Farmer explains the word לֵבָב/לֵב in the context of Prov 4:23–27 in this way: "The Hebrew word leb/lebab (translated 'heart') can also be translated 'mind' because its range of meaning in Hebrew includes concepts we often associate with the word 'mind' in English. The 'heart/mind' represents the place within the human body where both rational and emotional decisions are made. In vv. 23–27 the mouth and lips (v. 24), the eyes (v. 25), and the feet (vv. 26–27). Each part named represents an activity

this vital centre (heart) of personal existence comes by choice, not by chance, for the learner is exhorted, 'guard your heart'. The learner is personally responsible to decide to keep his heart aligned to wisdom."[79] The commitment of pathos (in either positive/wise or negative/fool sense) is found in Prov 1–7 as well as in Prov 8–9 (see 2:2, 20; 3:1, 3, 5; 4:4, 23; 5:12; 6:14, 18, 21, 32; 7:3, 7, 10, 25; and 8:5; 9:4, 16).

In fact, the father's rhetoric consistently demonstrates the listener (the son) to be a learner of wisdom both in Prov 1–7 and 8–9. The pathos that the father desires to arouse is for the son to receive, respond, value and assimilate wisdom so that he may be successful in his life.

Listener's Reaction

This section focuses on how the listener's pathos in Prov 1–7 continues and intensifies in Prov 8–9. The son does not speak when the father or Lady Wisdom speaks. However, the presence of the son is implied in these discourses (Prov 1–9) and his expected reaction is also made clear according to the rhetorical skills of the speaker. Richard P. Honeck shows how proverbial discourse can impact the listener, indicating:

> There are a number of functions that can be performed by each kind of trope: irony, sarcasm, understatement, hyperbole, rhetorical question. These functions are often considered to be figurative forms in their own right.... Of the five functions mentioned, proverbs are likely to be used for sarcasm, irony, and criticism in general because they are designed to correct someone's thoughts or behaviors, a process that requires pointing out that some ideal was not attained.[80]

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which out to be governed by wisdom teachings. Only a concerted effort by the whole person can succeed at wisdom's task." Kathleen A. Farmer, *Who Knows What Is Good?* (ITC; Grand Rapids: Wm. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1990), 40.

[79] Estes, *Hear, My Son*, 148.

[80] Richard P. Honeck, *A Proverb in Mind: The Cognitive Science of Proverbial Wit and Wisdom* (Mahwah, N.J.: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 1997), 85. Here sarcasm, irony and criticism are the rhetorical skills that are used by the speaker/author on one hand; on the other hand, they are the reactions

This author contends that the listener's reactions to the speech acts of the speaker (the

father)[81] demonstrate intimacy and irony in both Prov 1–7 and 8–9.

First let us look at intimacy. When the speaker speaks to the listener by calling בְּנִי

("my son") in Prov 1–7 (1:8, 10, 15; 2:1; 3:1, 11, 21; 4:10, 20; 5:1, 20; 6:1, 3; 7:1; cf. 4:1;

5:7; 7:24), the intimate father–son relationship is confirmed. The illocutionary force (the

speaker's intention realized in producing an utterance) of the father asks for obedience

from the son. This explains why these vocatives (בְּנִי, "my son") are always followed by a

volitional verb (jussive, imperative or cohortative, see Tables 18 and 21)[82] because this

combination (vocative + volitional verb) conveys a commanding request.[83] The pathos

which the father expects to arouse is that the son may endeavor to achieve success in life,

namely becoming wise (perlocutionary act / the listener's reaction).[84]

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that the listener/reader will have when these skills are used upon them.

[81] According James W. Voelz, "Whether large or small, all units of discourse are 'speech acts.' Indeed, literary criticism has developed this quite wholistically, speaking of the 'rhetoric' of a work." James W. Voelz, *What Does This Mean?: Principles of Biblical Interpretation in the Post–Modern World* (St. Louis: Concordia, 1997), 277. Voelz applies his pragmatics of language to J. L. Austin's three aspects of language: *locutionary act* (act of uttering, e.g., phonemes, morphemes, sentences or saying something about the world), *illocutionary act* (the speaker's intention realized in producing an utterance, e.g., request, compliment), and *perlocutionary act* (the intended effect of an utterance on the listener, e.g., to make listener do something, to make listener happy). See the relevant discussion in ibid., 276–300 and also see John L. Austin, *How to Do Things with Words* (2nd ed.; Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1975), 12 and 109; Paul A. Raabe, *Obadiah* (AB 24D; New York: Doubleday, 1996), 57–60 and "Why Oracles against Nations?" in *Fortunate the Eyes that See: Essays in Honor of D. N. Freedman* (ed. A. B. Beck, Andrew M. Bartelt, Paul A. Raabe, C. A. Franke; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995), 236–57; and Anne Barron, *Acquisition in Interlanguage Pragmatics: Learning How to Do Things with Words in a Study Abroad Context* (Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 2003), 11–14. In the following discussion, this author will focus on the investigation of the perlocutionary act upon the listener in order to see how the consistency/continuity of the pathos works in Prov 1–9.

[82] See Table 18 in 132 and Table 21 in 147–8.

[83] Most of the combinations (vocative + volitional verb) appear in the exordia of the fatherly discourses (see 1:8; 3:1, 11–12, 21–23; 4:1–2, 10–11, 20–22; 5:1; 6:20–24; 7:1–4), expressing the commanding/inviting requests of the father to promote the motivations (see Table 21). Some other cases that are used but not located in the exordium of a fatherly discourse have similar situations. For instance, the father speaks to the son: "My son, if the sinners entice you, do not consent." (1:10) The verb תֹּבֵא ("concent") is jussive, used for commanding/inviting requests. Also see 3:11; 5:20; 6:3; cf. 5:7; 7:24.

[84] See the descriptions of success in life in most of the motivation clauses (e.g., 1:9; 3:2; 5:2; 7:5 and

The pathos in Prov 1–7 continues in Prov 8–9 when Lady Wisdom demonstrates similar intimacy with her listeners. Although Lady Wisdom does not use the intimate title בְּנִי ("my son"), she addresses her listeners with the vocative בָנִים ("sons" in 8:32a) and the phrase בְּנֵי אָדָם ("sons of man" in 8:4b, 31b). The vocative בָנִים ("sons") is also juxtaposed with the volitional verb שִׁמְעוּ ("listen" in 8:32a), functioning similarly as those בְּנִי ("my son") in Prov 1–7 (see Table 21).[85] The intimacy of the pathos shows a similar relationship between Lady Wisdom and her audience. As Waltke explains the combination (vocative + imperative) used by Lady Wisdom in Prov 8:32, he indicates:

> Wisdom frames her encomium with *listen* (*šimʿû*; see 1:8) in the introduction and conclusion to her speech (8:6, 32), showing that this is the point of her encomium. The repetition of "Listen *to me*" (*lî*; see 5:7; 7:24) in the conclusions of the diptychs of chs. 7 and 8 strongly suggests that to listen to Woman Wisdom and the sage (the father) come to the same thing. She motivates their obedience by the laudatory exclamation, *and blessed are those blessed are those* (*weʾašrê*; see 3:13) *who keep* (*yišmōrû*; see 2:8; 8:20) *my ways* (*derākay*; see 1:15).[86]

The father wants his son to become wise or get wisdom in Prov 1–7 (4:5, 7); now wisdom becomes the goal to possess in Prov 8–9. The sense of intimacy is transferred from the direct speaker (the father) to the indirect speaker (Lady Wisdom) in the father's rhetoric. The pathos of intimacy is intensified when Lady Wisdom ascribes creational work to Yahweh (8:22–31; cf. 3:19–20; 1:7; 9:10). The father uses his illocutionary act (speaker's intention) to achieve the son's perlocutionary reaction through the *climax* (Lady Wisdom) of his instruction in Prov 8–9.

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etc.). According the prologue (1:5), the success of the son in life is to become wise, that is, to get wisdom. The listener's reaction (perlocutionary act) towards wisdom is caused by the speaker's oral instruction (locutionary and illocutionary acts).

[85] See Table 21 in 147–8, and the relevant discussion in 147–50.

[86] Waltke, *The Book of Proverbs Chapters 1–15*, 424 (italics Waltke's and underlining mine).

Second, the sense of irony and even sarcasm illustrates the coherence of the father's

rhetoric from Prov 1–7 into 8–9. For interpreting the pathos in Prov 1–9, Zogbo and

Wendland explain irony/sarcasm this way: "Irony and sarcasm are expressed when a

person says one thing but means something else. Though ironic statements are sometimes

humorous, they are more often biting and meant to ridicule or reprove someone."[87] In the

fatherly discourses (Prov 1–7), the ironic statements usually occur when the father

ridicules or reproves the wicked men or the adulteress, for instance:

> If they say, "come with us, let us lie in wait for (shedding) blood; let us
> ambush for the innocent without cause; let us swallow them alive like Sheol,
> and whole, like those who go down to the pit; we shall find all precious
> goods; we shall fill our houses with spoil; cast your lot among us, let us all
> have one money–bag." (1:11–14)

> I have spread my couch with covering; colored cloths of Egyptian linen. I
> have sprinkled my bed, with myrrh, aloes, and cinnamon. Come, let us drink
> our fill of love until morning; let us delight ourselves with love. (7:16–18)

These two cases reflect just the opposite of the truth, giving the listener a sense of

irony. In the first case, the wicked men ("sinners" in Hebrew) suggest to the listener the

way to become rich but the action will end with a destructive result (1:19). In the second

case, the scene shows just the opposite of a true love story, bringing the victim to

unavoidable death (7:26–27). The perlocutionary act which the father expects to arouse is

that the son will keep himself away from all kinds of temptation. The pathos is

strengthened when the father's warning against evil is emphasized through irony.

The same pathos also takes place in Prov 8–9. At the ending of Prov 8–9, Dame

Folly appears as the contrast to Lady Wisdom, conveying a strong sense of irony. Dame

Folly says,

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[87] Lynell Zogbo and Ernst R. Wendland, *Hebrew Poetry in the Bible: A Guide for Understanding and for Translating* (New York: United Bible Society, 2000), 49. Also see the relevant discussion in ibid., 49–50.

> Stolen water is sweet; and bread (eaten) in secret is pleasant. But he does not know that dead ones (are) there; in the depths of Sheol her guests (are).
> (9:17–18)

The irony in Dame Folly's speech consists in the totally opposite result. Water and bread are the supplies for sustaining and pleasing life. but now they become the power to destroy life. The sense of irony in Dame Folly follows the pathos that the role of the adulteress has caused in Prov 1–7. The perlocutionary act (avoiding evil / making a good choice) that the father expects the son to have extends from Prov 1–7 into 8–9.

This investigation of the listener's reaction has demonstrated the coherence and continuity carried out by the pathos of the father's rhetoric in Prov 1–9. How the listener reacts (perlocutoinary act) to the intimacy and irony which the speaker presents in his direct discourses (Prov 1–7) and indirect speeches (Prov 8–9) shows no difference in these two blocks (Prov 1–7 and 8–9). In terms of pathos, the sense of intimacy and irony also emphasizes the climax (Prov 8) through the higher relationship (intimacy of divinity/relationship with Yahweh) and the stronger contrast (irony of personified evil / Dame Folly). This means that the pathos of the father's rhetoric in Prov 1–7 continues and climaxes in Prov 8–9.

Summary

To summarize, the pathos of the father's rhetoric shows coherence and unity in the areas of the listener's identity, learning and reaction in Prov 1–9. The listener is the speaker's son. All of the rhetorical skills in these nine chapters target him. As long as the father speaks his direct discourses (Prov 1–7) or the indirect speeches through Lady Wisdom (Prov 8–9), the son is expected to learn and to react. He must take action (to listen/to choose) when Lady Wisdom shows up in the climax (Prov 8). And he must be

warned and take action (to deny/to choose) when all kinds of evil attempt to seduce and destroy him. Along with the pathos, the father's rhetoric in Prov 1–7 continues and climaxes in Prov 8–9.

Imagery Devices of the Father's Rhetoric

The Book of Proverbs, especially Prov 1–9, is full of imagery.[88] Without an appropriate analysis, the meaning of these images can be misunderstood, causing the difficulties in interpretation.[89] Wisdom, who appears as the first–person speaker (1:22–33; 8:4–36; 9:4–12), is also described in the third person (1:20–21;3:13–18; 4:5–9; 7:4–5; 8:1–3; 9:1–3), as a valuable virtue (2:6–15), and as instruction from the father's mouth (2:2; 4:11; 5:1). Without a unifying perspective (the father's rhetoric), these images are difficult to fit into the context.[90]

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[88] Waltke recognizes the significance of imagery language in Prov 1–9 and indicates: "Imagery or figurative language also characterizes all poetry. In addition to being evocative, imagery is another form of compactness, for it enables the author to communicate his message in fewer words." Waltke, *The Book of Proverbs Chapters 1–15*, 39. In approaching the imagery language of the poetry in Prov 1–9, Zogbo and Wendland also point out: "Figures of speech occur in every language. They are used in every speech style, from slang ("he's a real rat!") to more literary forms ("a land flowing with milk and honey"). In poetry, however, figures of speech are especially frequent and rich. These concrete images serve to bring alive abstract thoughts. They are not the message, but they bring the message to us in terms we can understand, feel, and even visualize." Zogbo and Wendland, *Hebrew Poetry in the Bible*, 41–42.

[89] Zogbo and Wendland remind us of the possible misunderstanding and difficulty caused by the imagery devices, and say, "Each biblical figure of speech must be properly analyzed and understood before it is translated. Some of the difficulty in understanding figures of speech comes from the fact that the basis of, or reason for, the comparison is often left out." Ibid., 42. If we treat personified Wisdom as a goddess (like Egyptian goddess Maat or Canaanite goddess Ashrah), how can this figure be interpreted in its context? According to Zogbo and Wendland, many difficulties in approaching the figure of speech (in the Hebrew poetry) are caused by misrecognizing the context, and they postulate: "Biblical figures of speech must also be analyzed from the viewpoint of their literary *context.*" Ibid., 43 (italics Zogbo's and Wendland's)

[90] Approaching the different voices or metaphors concerning Lady Wisdom in Prov 1–9, Alice M. Sinnott points out: "By undertaking a careful exploration of texts, I discovered original creations, expansive metaphors, new and ancient patterns, faint traces of other figures, reinterpretations, and much else. Some of these discoveries contributed to or lay behind the Wisdom figure studied. Engagement with the texts enabled me to hear many voices. The first of these was Wisdom's followed closely by voices of poets and writers who conceived, created, developed and enhanced the personified Wisdom figure in so many guises and in many different locations. Most insistent were and are the hosts of voices from communities where the multifaceted figure of Wisdom spoke, played, eluded searchers, and continues to delight in being with humanity." Alice Mary Sinnott, *The Personification of Wisdom*, (SOTSMS; Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005),

The usage of imagery language in Prov 1–9 follows the literary tradition in the Hebrew Bible and is effective in expressing affection. Joseph Blenkinsopp asserts that,

> In Proverbs 1–9, both *hokmâ* and *bînâ* ("understanding"; 7:4) are personified, and feminine personifications were in any case well established in the literary tradition—virgin Israel, daughter Zion, for example. This usage permitted the introduction of a range of affective language into the common stock—the language of union, erotic desire, affection between spouse, and the like—that might otherwise have been excluded.[91]

According to this observation, imagery language not only presents a visual picture of what is desired before its listener/reader, but also appeals to a mental picture of the nature of the desire. G. B. Caird points out:

> The full stock of a book's non–literal language, and more particularly its comparative language, is its imagery. It is a common error to think that imagery means picture language. It includes mental pictures, but a great deal more that is incapable of visualisation.[92]

This section presents how these images, particularly the figure of personified Wisdom (Lady Wisdom),show the mental world of the speaker/listener and build a consistent reading in Prov 1–9. Lady Wisdom connects the fatherly discourses (Prov 1–7) with her own speeches in Prov 8–9, making the text of Prov 1–9 a rhetorical whole.

How Lady Wisdom Continues

The idea of wisdom is formed and nurtured in the metaphorical language in Prov 1–9. The imaginary world of metaphors in these nine chapters makes abstract ideas more

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[91] Joseph Blenkinsopp, *Sage, Priest, Prophet* (Louisville, Ky.: John Knox Press, 1995), 43.

[92] Caird, *The Language and Imagery of the Bible*, 149. Caird explains the mental picture in imagery language this way: "Even when a comparison calls up a simple, clearly defined mental picture, its does not follow that the intended comparison is a visual one. 'My love is like a red rose / That's newly sprung in June; / My love is like the melodies / That's sweetly played in tune.' Burns's parallelism makes it plain that in each case he is comparing one delight with another. In the Bible too parallelism or the juxtaposition of images frequently helps us to locate the point of comparison." Ibid., 149–50.

concrete and understandable.[93] For instance, the metaphorical שְׁאוֹל ("Sheol") and בּוֹר

("pit") can be used as a trope (metaphorically) for those evildoers who swallow the

innocent (Prov 1:12). The בּוֹר ("cistern") in Prov 5:15–23 is a metaphorical image and

equivalent to one's own wife. In both the fatherly discourses (Prov 1–7) and Lady

Wisdom's speeches (Prov 8–9), we also find the metaphorical words דֶּרֶךְ ("way"),[94] נָתִיב

("path")[95] and מַעְגָּל ("track"/"path")[96] used for the style of life. The metaphorical words

such as פְּנִינִים ("rubies" / "corals"),[97] כֶּסֶף ("silver")[98] and חָרוּץ ("fine gold")[99] are used

to express value. The similarity and commonality of these devices in the two blocks

(Prov 1–7 and 8–9) are built on the father's rhetoric, providing a rhetorical atmosphere

for the personification of wisdom. The figure of Lady Wisdom is the same in both Prov

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[93] The imaginary world is built by the metaphorical language in Prov 1–9. Imagination is produced by this literary skill during the reading of the text, and creates an expectable and reachable distance between speaker and listener so that the understanding of the text has to be achieved with more effort of association, and thus more pleasure. In other words, the speaker doesn't appeal to a direct and easy comprehension, but he prefers to make his listener imagine what is said. When the imagery language, such as path, way, gold or Lady Wisdom, is heard in the ears of the listener, the listener is encouraged to remove the cover of imagery and reach the true meaning behind. In this way, the abstract ideas such as wisdom become more concrete and understandable. The listener will become more willing to accept the speaker's lecture because it is the listener himself who makes the move toward learning according to his own will.

[94] The word דֶּרֶךְ ("way") occurs thirty times in Prov 1–9. There are twenty four occurrences in Prov 1–7 (1:15a, 31a, 2:8b, 12a, 13b, 20a; 3:6a, 17a [twice], 23a, 31b; 4:11a, 11b, 14b, 19a, 26b; 5:8a, 21a; 6:6b, 23b; 7:8b, 19b, 25a, 27a) and six times in Prov 8–9 (8:2a, 13b, 22a, 32b; 9:6b, 15a).

[95] The word נָתִיב ("path") occurs five times in Prov 1–9. There are three occurrences in Prov 1–7 (1:15b; 3:17b; 7:25b) and two in Prov 8 (8:2b, 20b). According to Crenshaw, "Another image that plays an important part in the vocabulary of Israel's sages who composed the Book of Proverbs is the path or way to life. The significance of this terminology depends on the double sense with which the word for way was used for path and sovereignty." Crenshaw, *Old Testament Wisdom*, 66–7. See also Norman Habel, "The Symbolism of Wisdom in Proverbs 1–9," 131–57.

[96] The word מַעְגָּל ("track"/"path") occurs only seven times in Prov 1–7 (2:9b, 15b, 18b; 4:11b, 26a; 5:6b, 21b).

[97] The word פְּנִינִים ("rubies" / "corals") that is used for the precious stones occurs one time in Prov 1–7 (3:15a) and one time in Prov 8–9 (8:11a).

[98] The word כֶּסֶף ("gold") occurs three times in chapters 1–7 (2:4a; 3:14a; 7:20a) and two times in Prov 8–9 (8:10a, 19b).

[99] The חָרוּץ ("fine gold") occurs one time in Prov 1–7 (3:14b) and two times in Prov 8–9 (8:10b, 19a).

1–7 and 8–9 when the listener (the son) is guided by the father to listen to her.

The image of personified Wisdom appears in Prov 1–7 and again in Prov 8–9. The word חָכְמָה ("wisdom") occurs thirteen times in the singular and feminine form in both Prov 1–7 and 8–9 (Prov 1:2, 7, 2:6, 10; 3:13; 4:5, 7, 11; 8:1, 11, 12; 9:10; and two times in a plural form חָכְמוֹת in Prov 1:20; 9:1). The passages concerning personified wisdom are located in both Prov 1–7 and 8–9 (Prov 1:20–33; 3:13–20; 4:5–9; 8:1–36; and 9:1–12). The father shows wisdom as woman in order to make his rhetoric more persuasive to his audience.[100] As Andrew Steinman indicates:

> Yet the choice of a woman is more than simply adopting grammar as a guide. Since Prov 1–9 is addressed to Solomon's son, the woman Wisdom is intended to present an image of wisdom that is attractive to the son and that counters the attraction of the foolish world and its sinful ways.[101]

In order to approach how the imagery of Lady Wisdom in Prov 1–7 continues in the block of Prov 8–9, this section focuses on the female images of prophetess, bride, and life–giver.

Prophetess Image

Lady Wisdom appears as a prophetess in Prov 1:20–33 (Prov 1–7) and continues in the same image in Prov 8:1–36. Although there are different concerns in the messages of the two passages,[102] "the settings, addressees, and vocabulary of these two addresses by Wisdom are similar (1:20–21; 8:1–4), and their conclusions, contrasting the fates of those

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[100] According to Robert Alter, "In any poetic system, a good many of the complex effects of the poem are communicated to the reader or listener subliminally, though a conscious awareness of certain salient formal devices may help focus attentiveness." Alter, *The Art of Biblical Poetry*, 205.

[101] Steinman, *Proverbs*, 32.

[102] Waltke indicates: "The former (1:20–33) denounces the gullible and the foolish for rejecting her; the latter (8:1–36) praises her excellence and her rewards to win the gullible's allegiance." Waltke, *The Book of Proverbs: Chapters 1–15*, 393.

who listen to her with those who reject her, are similar."[103] In particular,

> The presence of Woman Wisdom at the gates of the city (8:3; see 1:21) also presents a significant image of the city, for it was in these locales that traffic, commerce, and legal proceedings occurred. The major gate was a large structure containing rooms for a variety of public functions, from commerce to judicial hearings (e.g., see 2 Sam. 18:24, 33). Prophets came to the gates to proclaim oracles of judgment and salvation (Amos 5:12, 15), while courts convened to settle legal disputes (2 Sam. 15:2; Jo 29:7). It also may have been the case that merchants plied their wares at the gates to travelers entering and leaving the city, while teachers gathered and instructed their students in these structures. Woman Wisdom's issuance of her invitation and her teaching at the gate draws on the images of human activities, commerce, justice, and teaching so central to human social organization and existence. Wisdom becomes the medium of social order and the basis for life–sustaining teaching that maintains creation.[104]

In the imagery development of the father's rhetoric, the rhetorical strategy of having Lady Wisdom appear as a prophetess (1:20–33) right after the first fatherly discourse (1:8–19) serves to sharpen the rebuke against the son. As William P. Brown indicates: "Wisdom's approach is clearly strategic: The force of her rhetoric lies in her ability to ascribe a guilty conscience to her listeners, thereby provoking a crisis of decision. This is clearly the rhetoric of rebuke at its sharpest!"[105] When the prophetess image faces the son again in Prov 8:1–36, the pathos changes from frustration to encouragement. Instead of indictment, the prophetess holds up for the son a bright future full of promises (8:7–10, 14–17) and blessings (8:18–21) if the son hears/accepts her (8:5–6, 10). She shapes what the successful life looks like for her audience, making the

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[103] Ibid., 393.

[104] Perdue, *Proverbs*, 140.

[105] William P. Brown, *Character in Crisis: A Fresh Approach to the Wisdom Literature of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1996), 32. Brown also indicates: "In short, by assuming a more critical stance, wisdom's discourse serves to sharpen, even heighten the hierarchical relationship between the wise and the immature. The son overhears, as it were, wisdom's indictment (1:22–33) against those whose conduct is shared by his peers. What is cast as an indictment against them serves as a rebuke against the son." Ibid., 33.

imagery development of the father's rhetoric reach its climax.

Bride Image

The bride image illustrates the development of imagery from Prov 1–7 to 8–9. Lady

Wisdom is described as a charming bride by the father when the word חָכְמוֹת/חָכְמָה is

used for personification. The choice of the feminine form is related to how this image

influences the listener on the basis of a marital relationship.

Lady Wisdom is introduced by the father as a bride in Prov 4:5–9. The erotic

description (especially חָבַק [embrace]) is employed to suggest that the son should keep a

good relationship with his "bride." As Claudia V. Camp indicates:

> I would want to interpret Prov 4:5–9 as marriage imagery, of a sort. …
> William McKane (1970:306) argues that this passage describes a scene
> involving a wealthy patroness and her protégé, because one would not expect
> a wife to exalt her husband in this manner. McKane's conclusion that 4.8's
> *tehabbeqennâ* 'does not describe the embrace of lovers, but the embracing of
> an influential patron by her protégé' is surprising, however. When applied to
> a man and woman, *hbq* in the piel always refers to an erotic embrace (Prov
> 5.20; Songs 2.6; 8.3). A review of the portraits of the counselor–wife would
> suggest, moreover, that when the wife offers good counsel, this advice might
> well result in honor for her husband. If she is more precious than jewels, as
> Prov 31.10 indicates, then surely she is capable of placing on his head a fair
> garland. Likewise, whether she 'is' his crown (Prov 12.4) or 'bestows' on
> him a crown, the imagery belongs to the marriage relationship.[106]

In Prov 1–7, some other passages also imply the bride image. The bridal

relationship is implied when the father urges the son to confess to Lady Wisdom: אַתְּ

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[106] Camp, *Wisdom and the Feminine in the Book of Proverbs*, 93–4. Supporting the bride image, Timothy J. Sandoval suggests, "The bridal imagery highlights an appeal to the 'son' to embrace Wisdom (4:8) as a bride and as a lover. The poetry in 4:5–9 juxtaposes its economic code with an erotic code. Wisdom is to be 'found' (מצא, 3.13; 8.17, 35) much as one 'finds' a good wife (18.22; 31:10)." Sandoval, *The Discourse of Wealth and Poverty in the Book of Proverbs*, 66. Also see the relevant discussion on the erotic language concerning the bride image in Roland E. Murphy, 'Wisdom and Eros in Proverbs 1–9,' *CBQ* 50 (1988): 600–3.

אֲחֹתִי ("you are my sister/bride") (7:4).[107] To the son, who is exposed to the temptation

and danger of the adulteress, the wife/bride is "likened to a cistern from which one drinks

life–giving water" (5:15–23).[108] All of these descriptions paint a picture of Lady Wisdom

as the bride which the listener is to keep and cherish.

In Prov 8–9 the development of this imagery reaches its climax when the bride

(Lady Wisdom) addresses her audience with the intimate phrase בִּי ("by me"; 8:15a, 16a;

9:11a), the description of a close relationship. In the fatherly discourses, the son might be

still wondering and hesitating to make a decision while the father is asking the son to

keep and cherish the bride (Lady Wisdom). Now, the absoluteness of בִּי ("by me") makes

the son hesitate no longer because his fate has already been decided. Instead of the father,

Lady Wisdom appears as the first–person speaker who appeals to the son's conscience,

making the son feel that his fate strongly depends on his bride, Lady Wisdom. This

marital relationship of promise should never be broken.

Life–Giver Image

The father describes Lady Wisdom as a life–giver, making this imagery consistent

in both Prov 1–7 and 8–9. If the son possesses wisdom, he possesses life. Life is the

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[107] Murphy approaches the passage in Prov 7:4–5 ("Say to Wisdom, You are my sister/bride; Call Understanding, friend.") and asserts: "The introduction continues as the father/teacher personifies the Wisdom he is urging. The important term is 'sister,' and its meaning is colored by the love language exemplified in Cant 4:9–5:1, where 'sister' occurs several times, coupled with 'bride.' The parallel term 'friend' indicates a kin relationship (Ruth 2:1; 3:2). This erotic description (cf. Prov 4:5–8) is deliberate and very important in view of what is to follow." Murphy, *Proverbs*, 43.

[108] Crenshaw, *Old Testament Wisdom*, 27. Crenshaw applies the cistern image (5:12–23) to a wife/bride and compares the passage with Eccl. 12:1–7, saying: "Two allegorical texts stand out as worthy links with riddles; these are the poignant description of old age in Ecclesiastes 12:1–7, which contains a few allegorical images, and the exquisite advice about marital fidelity in Proverbs 5:15–23, where a wife is likened to a cistern from which one drinks life–giving water. In both instances ciphers function on two levels at the same time, so that one must distinguish between general and special language. Cistern, for example, has two distinct meanings, and only those who possessed special knowledge grasped the cipher's full sense." Ibid.

emphasis in the blessing message of Prov 3:13–18:

> Blessed (is) the–man who–finds wisdom; (v. 13a)
> And–the–man who–gets understanding. (v. 13b)
> For better the–gain–from–her (is) than–the–gain–from–silver; (v. 14a)
> And–(better)–than–fine–gold her–product. (v. 14b)
> More–precious (is) she than–rubies; (v. 15a)
> And–all–what you–desire cannot compare–with–her. (v. 15b) Length of–life (is) in–her–right–hand; (v. 16a)
> In–her–left–hand (are) riches and–honor. (v. 16b)
> Her–ways (are) ways of–pleasantness; (v. 17a)
> And–all–her–paths (are) peace. (v. 17b)
> Tree–of–life she (is) to–those–who–hold on–her; (v. 18a)
> Those–who–hold–her–fast are–called–blessed. (v. 18b)

The two blessing words (אַשְׁרֵי in v. 13a and מְאֻשָּׁר in v. 18b) in the beginning and

ending of this passage rhetorically form an *inclusio*, emphasizing the value of wisdom.

According to the first half of this passage (vv. 13–15) in this *inclusio*, wisdom is better

than silver, fine gold, rubies, and everything valuable in the world (vv. 14a–15b). In the

second half (vv. 16–18), life becomes the most important blessing that Lady Wisdom can

promise for those who hold her (v. 16a, 18a).[109] The image of the tree of life connects the

passage with the Eden story in Gen 2–3 and makes Lady Wisdom the life–giver.[110]

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[109] The imagery development is explained as follows. First, the father has stated that wisdom is more precious than silver, gold and rubies (v. 14a, 14b, 15a), and everything valuable cannot compare with her. Second, Lady Wisdom has blessings of riches and honor in her left hand (v. 16b); but in her *right* hand, the more important hand in symbolic meaning, she holds *life* (v. 16a). The imagery development gradually moves towards the significance of life. The blessing of pleasantness and peace mentioned in v. 17 are related to life. At last, Lady Wisdom becomes the tree of life (v. 18a), namely the life–giver for those who hold her.

[110] Longman approaches the life–giver image this way: "Verse 18 presents a memorable metaphor that also associates Woman Wisdom with life. Invoking the memory of Eden, she is identified with the tree of life, that tree whose fruit grants life. One's relationship with Wisdom is described in sexual terms. One obtains life if one embraces this woman and holds her tight. At this point we must remember that the primary audience of this is young men, to whom such a metaphor would speak volumes." Longman, *Proverbs*, 137. Waltke notices the significance of this life–giver image and comments: "This verse (v. 18) brings the strophe to a *climactic* conclusion, moving beyond even the closing summaries of vv. 15 and 17. The concept of *a tree of life* (*'ēs–hayyîm*) to represent eternal life is part of the ancient Near Eastern culture in which Israel participated. It is mentioned in Gen. 2:2; 3:22, 24; Prov. 3:18; 11:30; 13:12; 15:4, in later Jewish eschatological literature (4 Esdr. 8:52; Rev. 2:4 and 22:2), and in Mandaic and Manichean sources." Waltke, *The Book of Proverbs: Chapters 1–15*, 259 (italics mine).

The image of life–giver continues in Prov 8–9 when Lady Wisdom proclaims the promise of life. In the motivation description (8:32–36) of her final statement in Prov 8, Lady Wisdom proclaims: כִּי מֹצְאִי מָצָא חַיִּים ("for he who finds me finds life") (8:35a). This colon brings the life–giver image back to the passage of 3:13–18 (especially 3:13a, 16a, 18a). Continuity is built by the same verbs (מצא, "to find" in 3:13a and 8:35a) and same image (Lady Wisdom). In the concluding statement (9:1–12), Lady Wisdom promises: כִּי־בִי יִרְבּוּ יָמֶיךָ וְיוֹסִיפוּ לְךָ שְׁנוֹת חַיִּים ("For by me your days will be multiplied, and years of life will be added onto you") (9:11). The reminder of the promise recalls that Lady Wisdom is the life–giver in Prov 3:13–18 and 8:35a, producing continuity in the development of imagery from Prov 1–7 to 8–9.

To sum up, Lady Wisdom, the chief image in Prov 1–9, is described as a prophetess, a bride and a life–giver. The father uses these images to portray wisdom in his direct discourses (Prov 1–7) and then, indirectly, makes the personified figure of Lady Wisdom speak to the same audience (Prov 8–9)—thus achieving the continuity and unity in Prov 1–9.

Imagery Climax in Proverbs 8–9

The imagery of Proverbs 8–9 creates a powerful climax to the father's rhetoric. In order to explain this, this section employs three perspectives, those of contrasting image, divine image, and instructing image.

Contrasting Image

Noticing the rhetorical function of the contrast between Lady Wisdom (Prov 8) and the adulteress (Prov 5–7), Claudia V. Camp indicates, "Comparison with the trickster invites the interpreter of Proverbs to take seriously the literary unity of the Strange

Woman and personified Wisdom before separating them too quickly into 'good' and 'evil'."[111] If Camp's statement is convencing, the rhetorical design of the contrasting images (Lady Wisdom and the adulteress) underlines the unity of the text in Prov 1–9. In fact, the juxtaposition of the positive and negative images makes the climax possible. On the positive side, the figure of Lady Wisdom assembles the images of prophetess (8:1–3), bride (8:15a, 16a) and life–giver (8:35a) which are used in Prov 1–7 (1:20–33; 4:5–9; 3:13–18) and creates an *emphasis* by means of summarization. On the negative side, the adulteress draws upon herself all the opposite images in Prov 1–7 such as false prophetess/liar (2:16; 5:3–6; 6:24; 7: 5, 14–22; cf. 9:13–17) (cf. prophetess), prostitute (5:19–20; 6:25–26, 29, 32; 7:10–13) (cf. bride) and life–destroyer (2:18–19; 5:5–6, 11, 14; 6:26–35; 7:22–23, 26–27; cf. 9:18) (cf. life–giver). The juxtaposition of Lady Wisdom (Prov 8) and the adulteress (Prov 2–7, particularly Prov 7) thus leads to the climax of the imagery development in Prov 1–9. As Charles F. Melchert points out,

> In Proverbs 1–9 Woman Wisdom is engaged in a contest between competing sets of values for the loyalty and understanding of the young and the wise. Here the sages have pictured the right path (which includes righteousness, justice, fear of the Lord, and self–discipline) as a beautiful woman and the wrong path (which includes thievery, disloyalty to parents, adultery, fornication, murder, stupidity, and lying) as a band of thieves and as a seductive prostitute. The good path leads to life, wealth, and honor, while the wrong path leads to death. By personifying these paths as women, the poet invites readers to an imaginative exercise in which the allure of each path is graphically depicted; thus, reader–learners can more nearly feel their seductive appeals.[112]

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[111] Claudia V. Camp, *Wise, Strange and Holy: The Strange Woman and the Making of the Bible* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 2000), 76.

[112] Melchert, *Wise Teaching: Biblical Wisdom and Educational Ministry*, 187. Noticing the emphatic effect that is produced by the contrasting images, Whybray also considers: "This chapter (Prov 8) has no doubt been placed here in order to present Wisdom as the alternative to the 'loose woman' of the proceeding Instructions and the woman of 7:6–23. While these women encounter the 'simple' young men at night in secret in the streets and invite them to their house (7:6ff), using deceitful words to promise them 'love' which will in fact turn to 'death', wisdom appears in daylight in the crowded streets and other

Divine Image

The divine image of Lady Wisdom in Prov 8:22–31 adds to the climax of imagery

development in Prov 1–9. As we saw when we examined the rhetorical structure of Prov

1–9, the personification of wisdom (3:13–20), particularly the divine image of wisdom

(3:19–20), serves as the center for the first five fatherly discourses (Prov 1:8–4:19) (see

Tables 4 and 5).[113] If so, how does this happen through the imagery device of the father's

rhetoric?[114] Caird categorizes the figure of Lady Wisdom in Prov 8 as anthropomorphism

(the personification of the abstract) and explains:

> Thus anthropomorphism in all its variety is the commonest source of
> metaphor, and in it we can observe both the cognitive and the expressive
> aspects of language at work. The human body, senses and personality are the
> objects with which we have the most direct, first–hand acquaintance, and the
> cognitive principle of proceeding from the known to the unknown makes it
> natural for human beings to see the rest of the world in the light of that
> experience. But the continuing popularity of such usage is undoubtedly due
> to its vividness and the power of its appeal to the imagination.[115]

Caird divides the anthropomorphism into two categories: the personification of the

inanimate (e.g., Gen 37:9; Isa 10:15) and the personification of the abstract (e.g., Wisd

18:14; Prov 8:1ff.). He provides this further explanation for what he means by

anthropomorphism: "The same two principles govern the use of anthropomorphic

imagery in reference to God. We have not other language besides metaphor with which to

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prominent places in the city, also to address the 'simple', and in *truthful* words (vv. 6–9) also offers them love (vv. 17, 36) which, if they regularly frequent her house (v. 34), will lead to 'life' (v. 35). This alternative choice is presented even more explicitly in chapter 9." Whybray, *Proverbs*, 120.

[113] See Table 4 in 72, Table 5 in 73 and the relevant discussion in 73–9.

[114] Perdue considers the rhetorical features of Prov 1–9 and postulates: "It is true that *images* and *metaphors* stand at the center of sapiential thinking and that the discourse of the sages embodies and articulates the meaning of images and metaphors." Perdue, *Proverbs*, 35 (italics mine). If so, how does this happen to impact the formation of the climax in Prov 8? How does the personification of wisdom uphold the climax on the basis of the rhetorical structure in Prov 1–9?

[115] Caird, *The Language and Imagery of the Bible*, 173–4.

speak about God. Abstract terms, such 'righteousness,' appear to be an exception to this rule, but on closer examination they are found to be abstracted from metaphors. The only choice open to us, therefore, is whether we derive our metaphors from the human realm or from the non–human, and it is important to note that the biblical writers use both kinds."[116]

Although the images of Lady Wisdom draw a great deal of attention and generate confusion among interpreters of Prov 8:22–31 (e.g., Lady Wisdom as a nursling or an artisan in 8:30a),[117] Yahweh is shown as the Creator and Sustainer of all creational work. The role of Lady Wisdom is that of a companion beside Him (Lady Wisdom says, אֶצְלוֹ וָאֶהְיֶה ["Then I was beside Him"]; 8:30a). The series of the temporal clauses led by the propositions בְּ (8:24a, 25a, 27a, 28a, 29a) and עַד (8:26a) construct the whole picture of the creational time when Yahweh is creating everything. Lady Wisdom is not the one who makes the creation happen; she is possessed (see קָנָנִי in 8:22a) by Yahweh. The effect of personification brings the whole passage (8:22–31) as well as the entire Prov 8

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[116] Ibid., 174. Concerning the metaphor and the imagination in Prov 1–9, Perdue also states his opinion that "Metaphors for God in Proverbs range from a divine judge who sits in judgment of human behavior, to an artisan engaged in creating a work of beauty and delight, to a parent who conceives or impregnates and then gives birth to and raises a child, to a teacher who instructs students in the traditions of prudence and life. Metaphors like these engage the imagination and allow divine nature and activity to be construed in ways that make sense of who and what God is and does." Perdue, *Proverbs*, 38–39.

[117] The major confusion is caused by the interpretation of the word אָמוֹן in 8:30a. Some scholars consider this word "nursling" and draw support from the Ancient Near Eastern language and context (8:22, 30–31 and also Lam. 4:5). See the theory's supporters in Michael Fox, " '*Amon* Again" in *JBL* 115 (1996): 699–702. V. A. Hurowitz, "Nursling, Advisor, Architect? אָמוֹן and the Role of Wisdom in Proverbs 8, 22–31" in *Bib* 80 (1999): 391–400. Some scholars support the translation "artisan (architect) or advisor." The interpretation is supported on morphological grounds, preserving the Masoretic vocalization, and claiming that the noun form *qatol* is one that indicates profession. The theory is supported by Avi Hurvitz, Cleon Rogers, M. Dahood, and many modern English translations (NKJ, NIV, NRS, NAS and etc.). See A. Hurvitz, "Toward a Precise Definition of the Term אָמוֹן in Proverbs 8:30" in *The Bible in the Light of Its Interpreters* (ed. S. Japhet; Jerusalem: Magnes, 1994), 647–50. Cleon Rogers III, "The Meaning and Significance of the Hebrew Word אָמוֹן in Proverbs 8.30" in *ZAW* 109 (1997): 208–20. Mitchell J. Dahood, "Proverbs 8:22–31" in *CBQ* 30 (1968): 513–9.

into an effect of climax when this Lady Wisdom is identified as the same one who is possessed by man (8:15a, 16a, 17ab, 35ab). The figure of Lady Wisdom that reflects the imagination of the father becomes a technique that helps make sense of the divine. As Perdue studies the metaphorical language in Prov 8:22–31, he postulates:

> Indeed, the content of the image is set forth and explored. But the discourse provides not straightforward definition but rather *an aesthetically nuanced set of rhetorical devices* (e.g. similarity of sounds, antithesis, comparison) that awaken in the hearer a receptivity to teaching through the engagement of both content and beauty.[118]

When the father addresses a listener for a persuasive purpose, he prefers "an aesthetically nuanced set of rhetorical devices" (especially Lady Wisdom) to the direct talk of "straightforward definition" in creating a climax of content development. In other words, the father decides to employ an indirect speaker (Lady Wisdom) to highlight or emphasize what he has already said in his direct discourses (Prov 1–7).

Instructing Image

In order to maintain the pedagogical style and to give a nod to the chief speaker (the father), the description of Lady Wisdom comes back to the fatherly–styled peroration in Prov 8:32–36 after the climax is achieved in Prov 8:22–31. As Milton P. Horne approaches Prov 8:32–36, he states,

> The final section of the poem returns to the familiar language and style of the opening appeal. The call to listen and the assertion of blessedness in v. 32 is expanded in vv. 33 and 34. Verse 34 specifies what the youth is to listen for in order to become wise: discipline. Verse 34 metaphorically implies that blessedness comes from a watchfulness "at wisdom's gates." The address to "children" in v. 32 *echoes* previous parental appeals (e.g., 7:24; 4:1). Readers make the adjustment in the denotations of the words, however. This is no

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[118] Perdue, *Proverbs*, 35 (italics mine).

longer the parent speaking; rather, it is Woman Wisdom using the familiar maternal (paternal) language of parental appeal.[119]

The imagery language is consistently developed along with the father's rhetoric. The switch of images (an artisan [co–worker] with Yahweh → a fatherly instructor) that occurs in Prov 8:32–36 clarifies the role of Lady Wisdom (she is not the Creator) and undergirds the effect of climax in the previous section (Prov 8:22–31). Indeed, the change of image helps to emphasize the climax.

To sum up, the investigation of this section demonstrates how Lady Wisdom climaxes in Prov 8 through the contrasting, divine and instructing images. Although the multifaceted features of Lady Wisdom are subtle, the father's rhetoric behind these images is identifiable. Lady Wisdom is designed as a rhetorical/metaphorical device with different images so that the father can continue his messages in the fatherly discourses (Prov 1–7) and emphasizes what he has said through a climax of personification (Lady Wisdom) in Prov 8.

How Lady Wisdom Concludes

This section presents how Lady Wisdom continues the imagery impact in Prov 8 and concludes the message of the entire block in Prov 1–9. It is necessary to explain the ending in Prov 9:1–18 in the three areas: images continuing, images choosing, and images impacting, so that the continuity and unity of the father's rhetoric can be discerned.

Images Continuing

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[119] Horne, *Proverbs—Ecclesiastes*, 128 (italics mine). In this comment, Horne intends to neutralize the fatherly or paternal style of the discourses into the "parental appeals" in Prov 1–7; however, what he observes concerning the continuity/ coherence of the father's rhetoric in the discourse style is correct and to the point.

The special arrangement of image in Prov 9 proves that the development of imagery language in Prov 1–8 *continues* in Prov 9, making the reading of Prov 1–9 an integral whole. On the basis of the rhetorical structure and content arrangement (see Table 4),[120] the message of Prov 9:1–18 concludes the entire block of Prov 1–9 with the two contrastive images: Lady Wisdom (9:1–6) and Dame Folly (9:13–18). They are the miniatures of the two imagery devices in the previous chapters: Lady Wisdom (3:13–20; 8:1–36) and the adulteress (2:16–19; 5:3–23; 6:24–35; 7:6–27). As Clifford approaches these two metaphorical women in Prov 9, he indicates:

> The chapter brings the first major part of Proverbs to a close. It draws on the sketches of the seductive woman in earlier instructions for its counterportrait to Woman Wisdom. In the two portraits of chap. 9, life and death are set off starkly against each other, evoking the life and death choice of Deut. 30:15–20. The additions vv. 7–10, 12, allude to chap. 1, thus forming an inclusio that closes the section chaps. 1–9.[121]

The rhetorical design of such balance (balance in personification, setting, action and message) between Lady Wisdom and Dame Folly proves the unity and continuity that already exists in the mind of the original author/editor. According to Blenkinsopp,

> A more promising line of inquiry, I believe, begins with the assumption that the Woman Wisdom of Proverbs 1–9 was conceived as a counter to the baleful influence of the Outsider Woman, who therefore is the primary symbolic persona in these chapters. The Outsider Woman represents alien cults, especially those with a strong sexual component, and the kind of behavior associated—in the writer's mind—with them. The association between the allure of alien deities (*'ĕlōbîm zārîm*) and sexual seduction ("whoring after foreign gods") was well established at the time of writing.[122]

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[120] See Table 4 in 72.

[121] Clifford, *Proverbs*, 105. Clifford provides the further interpretation for the two women: "Though the two women's invitations begin with identical language, they differ profoundly. One demands that her guests leave behind their ignorance, whereas the other trades on their ignorance. Folly promises only clandestine pleasure ("stolen water," "food eaten in secret") but it ends in death. Wisdom offers food and discipline that enable her guests to live."

[122] Blenkinsopp, *Sage, Priest, Prophet*, 43 (parentheses Blenkinsopp's). As Blenkinsopp considers the continuity and unity of the rhetorical design in Prov 1–9, he also points out, "While the Woman called

Images Choosing

The parallel design of Lady Wisdom and Dame Folly in Prov 9 is intended to make

the audience choose. As Gitay indicates, "Speakers use a variety of poetic devices in

order to achieve a pragmatic goal, namely, to appeal to their listeners and to communicate

effectively with them."[123] The chief speaker (the father) presents the two women for the

son to choose from so that a pragmatic/educational goal may be achieved. Murphy

approaches the two women this way:

> The goal is praxis: how to live (*savoir faire/savoir vivre*). To this end the
> educators, whom the text identifies as father/mother, lay out a lifestyle that
> must be followed, if one is to avoid folly (=death). This is education with
> passion: the tone of the parent/teacher runs a certain gamut: from cajoling to
> threatening. The pursuit of wisdom breaks down into several goals: self–
> control, justice, diligence, avoidance of temptation, and so forth. Thus
> wisdom *becomes* justice or righteousness, and folly becomes sin or
> wickedness. Undergirding this program is the belief that wisdom leads to true
> life (prosperity, etc.), while folly destroys. This is obvious from the great
> emphasis laid on the two ways that confront youth.[124]

The two women represent the two choices (good and evil) as well as the two life

styles. Their vivid appearance is intentional so that the audience may find it easier to

make a good decision. "The previous chapters *have prepared* the ground for this (the

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Wisdom does not seem to be presented in the guise of a goddess, it is perfectly possible that she was conceived as a counter to the baleful influence of the Foreign or, more precisely, Outsider Woman, who would therefore be the primary symbolic figure in these chapters (2:16–19; 5:3–23; 6:24–35; 7:5–27; 9:13–18). This need not surprise, since the Woman called Wisdom embodies the sage's teaching and, as such, functions precisely to counter deviant and transgressive religious and moral conduct. The Outsider Woman's seductive arts are described graphically, not to say luridly, and in some detail. There is even the motif, common to ancient and modern fiction, of the husband absent on business (7:19–20). We would therefore be led to think of this portrait as serving the purpose of moral admonition, and indeed, the point about marital infidelity is made explicitly and in moralizing terms (5:15–20; 6:25–35)." Joseph Blenkinsopp, *Wisdom and Law in the Old Testament: The Ordering of Life in Israel and Early Judaism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 159.

[123] Gitay, *Isaiah and His Audience*, 3.

[124] Murphy, *Proverbs*, 62 (italics Murphy's). Concerning the educational nature of imagery language in Prov 9:1–18, he says, "For it *is* an instruction, and that intent must be kept in mind. We take our cue from the cue from the "purpose" described in 1:1–6. This can be stated in other words: the instruction is a program in character formation portraying the several values that should be exemplified in the conduct of youths." (italics Murphy's) Ibid.

juxtaposition of Lady Wisdom and Dame Folly)."[125] This explains how the continuity and unity is achieved in Prov 1–9.

Images Impacting

The father chooses image devices for the climax (Prov 8) as well as for the conclusion (Prov 9) in the rhetorical structure/development of Prov 1–9 so that the son may respond to his instructions (Prov 1–7) according to the image impacts. The son is expected to choose, imitate, speak, behave, love, hate, avoid and escape according to what he envisions through images, either good or evil. A. Labahn explains the function image/metaphor this way:

> To deal with metaphors means to look for linguistic items with polyvalent meanings. Metaphors do not bear just one particular sense within themselves to be elaborated by sophisticated linguistic or semantic analysis; rather, metaphors generate various ways of understanding and interpreting their meanings. Metaphors are not unambiguously clear but already carry various senses within themselves.[126]

Lady Wisdom and Dame Folly in Prov 9 have more than one possible meaning. The two metaphorical women are associated with moral decision, moral judgment (wise or folly), marital relationship, intelligence, and divine relationship (see 9:10; cf. 1:7). These imagery devices are the best choice for the father as he summarizes his previous discourses (Prov 1–7) into a brief and concise idea. That is, the father makes use of the images of abundant meanings for his son so that the son will make a wise decision.

To sum up, the investigation of how Lady Wisdom concludes presents the continuity and unity of the father's rhetoric through the three imagery perspectives of

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[125] Ibid., 280 (italics and parentheses mine).

[126] A. Labahn, "Wild Animal and Chasing Shadow: Animal Metaphors in Lamentations as Indicators for Individual Threat," in *Metaphor in the Hebrew Bible* (ed. P. van Hecke; Leuven: Leuven University, 2005), 68.

Prov 9: images continuing, images choosing, and images impacting. In the concluding chapter (Prov 9), the father uses Lady Wisdom and Dame Folly to conclude his instructions by continuing the contrastive tension between wisdom (Lady Wisdom) and anti–wisdom (the adulteress/Dame Folly) in Prov 1–8. He intentionally expects the proper choosing and polyvalent impacts from the son through the rhetorical design.

Chapter Summary

This chapter has examined the father's rhetoric in the persuasive dimension, specifically in the areas of stylistic elements, ethos, pathos and imagery devices. These stylistic features demonstrate the unity and continuity of Prov 1–7 and 8–9. Stylistic elements include volitional verbs, adverbial clauses, parallelisms, and sound. Ethos presents an analysis of fatherly motivation, authority, and persuasive expression, and proves that the father is the chief speaker in Prov 1–9. His rhetoric in Prov 1–7 continues and climaxes in Prov 8–9. Pathos directs this investigation to focus on the son as the targeted listener in Prov 1–9, and to consider his identity, learning, and reaction. Finally, imagery throughout Prov 1–9 is consistent, climaxing in Prov 8–9. All of these areas in the persuasive dimension confirm indicate that the father's rhetoric in Prov 1–7 continues and climaxes in Prov 8–9, making the two sections a single whole.

CHAPTER SEVEN

CONCLUSIONS

Proverbs 1–9 is a work which fashions "a doctrine of the importance of the household as a place of piety and education."[1] As Clements observes,

> This devolved upon the primacy of the *father* as the head of the house, the responsibility of both parents for instruction of their children and the necessity for these children to be obedient to their parents and to give careful heed to what they were taught. This wisdom teaching promised, as a consequence of such a spiritual home structure, the assurance that the household would be the sphere of 'blessing' and that it would be secure and would prosper.[2]

Accordingly, the instructions of discourses in these nine chapters are built upon the father, the chief speaker. The father uses his rhetoric "to handle literary forms with superb artistry"[3] such as the fatherly discourses (Prov 1–7) and wisdom speeches (Prov 8–9), making Prov 1–9 an integral whole.

Every part in Prov 1–9 is located where it is, not randomly, but for a rhetorical purpose, which is revealed in the prologue of Prov 1–9 (1:1–7). Several questions must be asked to these chapters: How is every part related to one another? Who does the teaching? How is the teaching of the speaker carried out? Who is the listener? And how is the imagery developed? These questions reflect the difference between the father's voice

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[1] Clements, *Wisdom in Theology*, 126.

[2] Ibid (italics mine).

[3] Gerhard Von Rad, *Old Testament Theology* (Vol. I, trans. D. M. G. Stalker; New York: Harper & Row, 1962), 443.

(Prov 1–7) and wisdom's voice (Prov 8–9), demonstrating the gap between Prov 1–7 and 8–9. All of the questions can be crystallized into this: How does the father's rhetoric in Prov 1–7 continue and climax in Prov 8–9? Without the answer to this question, the structure and reading in Prov 1–9 are disjointed.

This chapter of conclusions provides the result for this question, presenting the investigations of the previous chapters in this study. The summary of these chapters is as follows.

Summary of the Chapters

Chapter One introduces the status of Prov 1–9 in current scholarship, demonstrating that the setting of these chapters is the family and the chief speaker is the father. On the basis of these assumptions, the rationale of this study targets how the father uses his rhetoric in Prov 1–7, and continues and climaxes the same rhetoric into Prov 8–9.

Chapter Two presents the current scholarship in Prov 1–9 regarding form–redactional criticism and feminist criticism. Form–redactional criticism is successful in restoring the characteristics of various genres in the text, and relating an ancient Near East relevance (e.g., Egyptian instructions). However, the consequence of this approach is a fragmentation of the text (the text is the result of different layers), and the unity and continuity of the text are destroyed. Feminist criticism is successful in producing a different insight in interpreting Prov 1–9, but this method focuses on female imagery and ideology, thus failing to recognize the appropriate rhetoric in these nine chapters.

Chapter Three outlines rhetorical criticism. It delineates a brief historical development of classic rhetoric, and how rhetorical criticism is applied to biblical studies, particularly in the area of Prov 1–9.

Chapter Four provides the introduction of the rhetorical strategies in which this study develops its rationale. It divides rhetorical strategies into compositional and persuasive dimensions. The compositional dimension discusses the structure and content arrangement in Prov 1–9. And the persuasive dimension provides evidence in the areas of stylistic elements, ethos, pathos and imagery devices. The two dimensions are designed to discover the unity and continuity in Prov 1–9, demonstrating that the father gives his direct discourses in Prov 1–7 and that in an indirect manner he addresses his son through Lady Wisdom in Prov 8–9.

Chapter Five offers the investigations of the compositional dimension regarding the structure and content arrangement of the father's rhetoric in Prov 1–9. It divides the rhetorical structure of Prov 1–7 into the two halves with different emphasis. The first half is composed of the first five fatherly discourses (1:8–4:19), centering on the description of wisdom (3:13–20). The second half of the latter five fatherly discourses (4:20–7:27) emphasizes the warning against the evil, which is personified as the adulteress (the strange woman). Along with the structure, the content arrangement demonstrates the progressive perspective (from hard–to–learn to easy–to–learn mode), the contrastive perspective (wisdom vs. anti–wisdom), and the connecting perspective (father's comments in 8:1–3; 9:1–3, 7–12).

Chapter Six demonstrates the persuasive dimension regarding stylistic elements, ethos, pathos and imagery devices of the father's rhetoric in Prov 1–9. Stylistic elements include the evidence in volitional verbs, adverbial clauses, parallelisms and sounds. Ethos approaches the areas of motivation, authority and persuasive expressions. Pathos shows the listener's identity, learning and reaction in order to prove the presence of the same

audience between Prov 1–7 and 8–9. Imagery devices indicate that the development of imagery language is consistent and unified between Prov .1–7 and 8–9 through the personified figure of Lady Wisdom.

Concluding Observations

That the block of Prov 8–9 is consistent with Prov 1–7 and that the father's voice in the fatherly discourses (Prov 1–7) is heard in accordance with the wisdom's voice (Prov 8–9) depend on the interpretation of the gap between these two blocks. Scholars try to fill–in the gap between Prov 1–7 and 8–9 and provide either a diachronic or synchronic interpretation on the structure and reading of the text. This study chooses form–redactional criticism (e.g., McKane and Whybray) and feminist criticism (e.g., Brenner and Camp) as the representatives of diachronic and synchronic approaches, respectively utilizing their strengths and responding to their weaknesses, this study opts to employ rhetorical criticism in its analysis of Prov 1–9.

Form–redactional criticism explores the process and origin of the text in a diachronic manner, showing the formation of the different layers according to various genres. For instance, Whybray found the father's rhetoric in the fatherly discourses (Prov 1–7), but does not extend the structure and reading of Prov 1–7 into 8–9 because, instead of a consistent manner, his categorization of the fatherly discourses misplaces the sections of Prov 4:1–9 and 6:1–19 (Prov 4:1–9 is in, and Prov 6:1–19 is out), and excludes entirely the block of Prov 8–9. Whybray is not consistent with the ten rhetorical markers (בְּנִי, "my son") and denies the continuity of the wisdom materials with the fatherly discourses. Therefore not only the integrity of the text in Prov 1–9 becomes doubtful, but also any continuity of the reading is lost, let alone the considerable

consistency that is found in stylistic elements, ethos, pathos, and imagery devices between Prov 1–7 (the fatherly discourses) and 8–9 (the wisdom materials).

Regarding structure, Steinmann's theory on the ten fatherly discourses is more consistent with the text than Whybray's, and provides a better basis. Steinmann follows the rhetorical features (e.g., בְּנִי, "my son") that exist in the text and maintains a holistic perspective so that the value of metaphorical language (particularly Lady Wisdom) is illuminated along with the whole structure and stylistic development in Prov 1–9. It is the father's rhetoric that utilizes the skill of personification (imagery devices) to achieve what the speaker intends to express about wisdom. The climax of the entire instruction in Prov 1–9 is implied in the prologue (Prov 1:1–7, especially v. 2 and v. 7), well–prepared in the wisdom–centered structure (Prov 1:8–4:19), strongly expected in the evil–focused concerns (Prov 4:20–6:35), and majestically fulfilled with the personification of Lady Wisdom in Prov 8–9.

On the basis of the composition in Prov 1–7, the father introduces Lady Wisdom (8:1–3; 9:1–3), creating the climax (Prov 8) and conclusion (Prov 9) of Prov 1–9. In fact, form–redactional critics (e.g., McKane, Whybray and Fox) consider the block of Prov 8–9 not to be an original part of the text in Prov 1–9. They believe that these wisdom poems were interpolated at a latter time. According to their redactional analysis, the coherence of the father's rhetoric remains only in the fatherly discourses of Prov 1–7 and does not continue in Prov 8–9.

First of all, not every part of Prov 8–9 comes out the mouth of personified Wisdom. The short introductions of personified Wisdom (8:1–3; 9:1–3) are the *direct* fatherly comment *bridging* the fatherly discourses in Prov 1–7 and the wisdom speeches in Prov

8–9. Second, personified Wisdom does not appear in Prov 8–9 for the first time; she appears much earlier among the fatherly discourses (1:20–33; 3:13–20; 4:5–9). Third, the rhetorical motto "the fear of Yahweh" (1:7 and 9:10) leave the clue of coherence in both blocks of Prov 1–7 and 8–9. Fourth, the content arrangement presents a balanced sequence in progressive mode (wisdom lessons from easy–to–learn to hard–to–learn) and contrastive mode (wisdom v.s. anti–wisdom), thus certifying the unity in Prov 1–9.

Feminist criticism employs inappropriate rhetoric (female rhetoric) to interpret the text in Prov 1–9 thereby bringing about a confusion of the speaking roles and lose the significance and emphasis of imagery devices. For instance, Camp utilizes personified Wisdom (Lady Wisdom) which she equates with the mother to fill the gap between Prov 1–7 and 8–9. Instead of a father, the speaker of Prov 1–7 becomes a mother according Camp or a female rebuker according to Brenner. Feminist critics do not recognize the irregularity of wisdom (e.g., singular/plural or first–person/third–person) and the appropriate rhetoric behind the imagery devices. Therefore, they fail in identifying the proper ethos and pathos in the structure and reading.

Accordingly, a climax is not reasonably palpable in Prov 1–9, because feminist criticism lacks enough internal (textual) evidence to uphold a balanced sequence in the content arrangement and imagery development between Prov 1–7 and 8–9. For instance, Brenner insists that F (female) voice dominates in Prov 1–9. She uses the female images in Prov 8–9 and Prov 31:10–31 to set the tone for the reading of Prov 1–9, but she can not explain the male rhetoric in the father's autobiographic expression (Prov 4:1–9) as well as the exordia spoken with father's voice/authority in every fatherly discourse (1:8–9;2:1–5; 3: 1–2, 11–12;4:1–2, 10–11, 20–22; 5:1–2;6:20–24; 7:1–5). In other words, the

feminist critics are not consistent in treating every part of the text Prov 1–7, thus missing the emphatic effect of the father's rhetoric in the climax of Prov 8.

Feminist criticism fails to reflect the real culture of ancient Israel (family circumstance) and the greater context (the wisdom literature and the Old Testament). The father–son formula is found in the canonical texts (e.g., Job 1:2, 4–5; 29:16; Qoheleth 12:12). Both the patriarchal history (Genesis 12–50) and the lifestyle of ancient Israelite society which reflected a fatherly connection in the rest of the Old Testament (e.g. Psal. 34:11; 78:3), helps demonstrate that father is the primary candidate as the speaker in Prov 1–9. In particular, the catechetical responsibility that was carried by fathers (cf. Deut. 6:4–25; Exod. 12:26, 27; 13:14; Josh. 4:6–7, 21–23) reinforces the association of the chief speaking role in Prov 1–9 with the earlier history of Israel. All of these prove that the *Sitz im Leben* of Prov 1–9 is family, and the chief speaker of it is the father. Feminist critics do not follow the father's rhetoric in Prov 1–9 because they do not seriously adopt these historical and textual backgrounds.

In addition, both form–redactional and feminist criticism does not deal with the father's rhetoric regarding the interaction of ethos and pathos. These two methods either ignore the issues of ethos and pathos (form–redactional criticism), or misconstrue them (feminist criticism). The investigations on ethos (motivation, authority and persuasive expressions) demonstrate that the father is the chief speaker in Prov 1–9 and his rhetoric in Prov 1–7 continues and climaxes in Prov 8–9. Pathos in the fatherly discourses (Prov 1–7) is proven to be the same with that in the wisdom's speeches (Prov 8–9), demonstrating that both are targeting the same audience (the son).

Both form–redactional and feminist criticisms do not consider the development of

imagery devices (Lady Wisdom) in the light of the father's rhetoric. The father presents Lady Wisdom as the prophetess (1:20–33), the bride (4:5–9; 5:15–23; 7:4) and the life–giver (3:13–18) in Prov 1–7. In the indirect manner, the father continues using Lady Wisdom to summarize these images and to connect her with Yahweh in Prov 8 so that he achieves the effect of climax to impress the listener. This emphatic rhetoric upheld by Lady Wisdom concludes in Prov 9. The father uses Lady Wisdom again to end the entire series of instruction in his final comment (9:7–12), which is located between Lady Wisdom (9:1–6) and Dame Folly (9:13–18). His purpose is to make his son choose between wisdom and folly. Accordingly, the development of imagery devices (Lady Wisdom) supports the consistent operation of the father's rhetoric between Prov 1–7 and 8–9.

Proverbs 8–9 was never intended to be separated from Prov 1–7. Proverbs 8–9 cannot reveal its value of emphasis (climax–conclusion) on wisdom without the previous fatherly discourses; and Prov 1–7 becomes pointless and scattered if there is no climax and conclusion in Prov 8–9. The existence of the climax–conclusion in Prov 8–9 confirms the consistent rhetoric (the father's rhetoric) with Prov 1–7.

The value of this study rests on its proof of the unity and continuity in Prov 1–9. It reinforces the significance of the fourth commandment ("Honor your father and mother," Exod. 20:12; Deut. 5:16), which Yahweh establishes to bless human life. The father, the chief speaker of Prov 1–9, is the major contributor to the continuity and allows the listener/reader to stand against temptation. Following this thread of unity and continuity, Lady Wisdom, introduced by the father's rhetoric, guarantees a prosperous life to the listener/reader.

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