

## WISDOM'S FEAST

Lesson Scripture: Proverbs 9

Focus Scripture: Proverbs 9:1-6, 8-10, 13-18

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*Key Verse: Lay aside immaturity, and live, and walk in the way of insight.  
Proverbs 9:6 (NRSV)*

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### PROVERBS 9:1-6, 8-10, 13-18 (NRSV)

#### Proverbs 9:1-6

1 Wisdom has built her house, she has hewn her seven pillars.

2 She has slaughtered her animals, she has mixed her wine, she has also set her table.

3 She has sent out her servant-girls, she calls from the highest places in the town,

4 "You that are simple, turn in here!" To those without sense she says,

5 "Come, eat of my bread and drink of the wine I have mixed.

6 Lay aside immaturity, and live, and walk in the way of insight."

#### 8-10

8 A scoffer who is rebuked will only hate you; the wise, when rebuked, will love you.

9 Give instruction to the wise, and they will become wiser still; teach the righteous and they will gain in learning.

10 The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and the knowledge of the Holy One is insight.

#### 13-18

13 The foolish woman is loud; she is ignorant and knows nothing.

14 She sits at the door of her house, on a seat at the high places of the town,

15 calling to those who pass by, who are going straight on their way,

16 "You who are simple, turn in here!" And to those without sense she says,

17 "Stolen water is sweet, and bread eaten in secret is pleasant."

### PROVERBS 9:1-6, 8-10, 13-18 (KJV)

#### Proverbs 9:1-6

1 Wisdom hath builded her house, she hath hewn out her seven pillars:

2 She hath killed her beasts; she hath mingled her wine; she hath also furnished her table.

3 She hath sent forth her maidens: she crieth upon the highest places of the city,

4 Whoso is simple, let him turn in hither: as for him that wanteth understanding, she saith to him,

5 Come, eat of my bread, and drink of the wine which I have mingled.

6 Forsake the foolish, and live; and go in the way of understanding.

#### 8-10

8 Reprove not a scorner, lest he hate thee: rebuke a wise man, and he will love thee.

9 Give instruction to a wise man, and he will be yet wiser: teach a just man, and he will increase in learning.

10 The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom: and the knowledge of the holy is understanding.

#### 13-18

13 A foolish woman is clamorous: she is simple, and knoweth nothing.

14 For she sitteth at the door of her house, on a seat in the high places of the city,

15 To call passengers who go right on their ways:

16 Whoso is simple, let him turn in hither: and as for him that wanteth understanding, she saith to him,

17 Stolen waters are sweet, and bread eaten in secret is pleasant.

18 But they do not know that the dead are there, that her guests are in the depths of Sheol.

18 But he knoweth not that the dead are there; and that her guests are in the depths of hell.

### KEY TERMS

- **Hewn** – Chop or cleave, carved.
- **Faithful** – Active practice of kindness or piety, loyalty rooted in belief.
- **Scoffers** – Mockers.
- **Without Sense** – Lacking knowledge and understanding.
- **Good** – Pleasant and agreeable.
- **Fear** – Reverence, deep respect.
- **Blameless** – Completeness, integrity.
- **Soul** – Inner being of a person.
- **Complacency** – Self-satisfaction accompanied by unawareness of deficiencies.

Before wisdom (the woman) could begin to utter a word, she first had to prepare a place to receive those who inclined their ear to listen.

in search of and practicing wisdom. We recalled the sayings taught to us by our parents/guardians, and looked at ways we can implement them into our own lives, and the lives of those whom we influence. Now is the time to put it all into action and bring others along.

### TELLING THE BIBLE STORY

The writer of Proverbs 9 has decided to use the concept of a feast to bring forth the final message of wisdom for this unit of lessons. There are a few major themes to pull out in order to fully understand how to introduce wisdom to others. First, it begins with preparation.

Before wisdom (the woman) could begin to utter a word, she first had to prepare a place to receive those who inclined their ear to listen. Preparations began with the physical building of a space, and in this space, she set up seven pillars to display not only the capacity of the space, but the security of it. She wanted her guests to

### INTRODUCTION

We have spent the last few weeks discussing the value, the gifts, and the call of wisdom. We have looked at ways to discern sound advice from foolish words and what comes from living a life

feel safe and secure.

Next, she made a feast fit for a king. She spared no resource as she wanted to assure her guests they would not only enjoy themselves, but be satisfied without distractions.

Having everything set, the woman used her servants to sound the dinner bells. She extended an open invitation to come and share in the festivities. Ironically, her invitation was not geared towards the best or the brightest, or the most pious. She personally called out to and opened her home and her table to those on whom others would have turned their back. It was an invitation for those with room left to grow, to come and learn an alternate way to live life. A life not built on promiscuity, immaturity, or fleeting riches, but a life filled with lasting knowledge, skills, and instruction, which yields riches better than money or wealth.

This was not the time to bash wisdom's guests and condemn them to hell. It was an opportunity to allow them to spend

time with her in a less threatening and judgmental environment.

### SANKOFA

*"Food is for more than survival, it's a moment when memories are created and survival commemorated."* – Kelley D. Evans

The term "Sunday Dinner" is familiar in African American households. To those without insight into its history, it is more than just a time to eat. To those leading in and indulging in the tradition, it is a time when the matriarch of the family beckons all her children to gather. They do not merely come together to eat – they are an integral part of the preparation.

Some of the greatest lessons come from the kitchen where the women usually gather, or the couch where the men often gather. The women use the ingredients and their quantities, the food preparation, the stove or oven temperatures, etc. as teaching aids. The men usually use sports and movies, and the stories of past times as teaching aids.

A life not built on promiscuity, immaturity, or fleeting riches, but a life filled with lasting knowledge, skills, and instruction, which yields riches better than money or wealth.

These practical tools allow the younger generation to hear the stories of those before, and allow these sages to share parables and anecdotes about life, family, and being black in America.

The stories are not accusatory, nor are they used to induce shame. They are simply life lessons learned through the power of another's narrative. By the time everyone comes to the table, much wisdom has already been passed along. When the time to eat draws closer, and everyone gathers around the table, there is a spirit of receptivity, trust, and love, even when the conversations and stories are not so pleasant.

Wisdom gathers her children around food, for she knows she can provide them nourishment for their stomachs and their spirits.

### CASE STUDY

There are many ways and many reasons we come together. Sometimes, we come together for happy occasions,

and other times, sad occasions. Whatever the case, there is something special about setting aside time to be with those who we care about. Sharing a meal is a simple, yet sacred occasion. It's therapeutic, gives us an excuse to converse, and opens the door for reflection. Sharing food cultivates community because the implications of sharing a meal extend beyond the time of eating. It is a universal

act that is important to building relationships within people or groups. Intentionally eating together creates time and space to engage in the spiritual and intellectual levels that are unique to human beings.

While there are other places people meet, gathering around a meal is the most accessible because if nothing else, everyone

eats. Everyone needs to eat, and a meal brings everyone together in a really tangible way that reflects a greater purpose. The communal meals transform the moment into something more unique and meaningful. Those who participate

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become part of something greater than themselves as individuals.

Co-founders Lennon Flowers and Rev. Jennifer Bailey, an AME itinerant elder, have encapsulated this concept with *The People's Supper*. Through consultation and advisement, they have traveled all over, teaching leaders how to create and convene spaces of meaningful connections and engagement in difficult discourse. The spaces they created are much like the feast prepared in today's text.

### LIFE APPLICATION

In life, we often have to make choices. Sometimes the options vary greatly and are obvious in their difference; however, sometimes, discernment is harder.

Even the study passage for today from Proverbs makes clear that sometimes *wisdom* and *folly* seem to have a lot in common. They both have two houses. They both prepare a meal. They both extend an invitation. We have to choose. One house will stand; the other will eventually fall. One meal brings life and health; the other diminished life, even

death. One invitation is for our good; the other seeks to separate us from God's will. The similarities as well as the differences make discernment such an important practice for the Christian. We must constantly pray for discernment that will lead us to accept wisdom's invitation.

Together in small groups, design a gathering much like the one in Proverbs 9; plan the decor, food, volunteers, invitations, and itinerary. Decide who would be responsible for spreading the word, who would prepare the meal, and who would host the gathering. Consider those whom you would like to invite and how you would go about making sure they are comfortable. Set a date before the end of this quarter to host this gathering. Share your event with your classmates when led by your teacher.

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### QUESTIONS:

1. What would it look like if our churches created more "spaces" for connection rather than condemnation?
2. What are some of the challenges to creating this type of space?

3. Considering the lessons from the previous weeks, create an outline of what a *Wisdom Feast* would look like.

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*Life Lessons Playlist, "79 Best Songs That Give Life Advice."*

<https://spinditty.com/playlists/Life-Lessons-Playlist-35-Best-Songs-With-A-Message>

Go through the list and see which one speaks to you, and if there is another that is not on this list, add it and share with the class.

Remember, each of us is on different parts of the path of wisdom. The wisdom you need now may look different from what you need later. Close this session with a prayer for discerning God’s wisdom for this unique moment in your life.

**CLOSING DEVOTIONS**

We will close out this lesson with the

**HOME DAILY BIBLE READINGS**

**June 22–June 28**

<b>Monday</b>	Psalm 119:97-104 (Law Provides the Edge)
<b>Tuesday</b>	Matthew 25:1-13 (Wise and Foolish Bridesmaids)
<b>Wednesday</b>	Ephesians 3:7-13 (Church Proclaims the Wisdom of God)
<b>Thursday</b>	1 Corinthians 6:1-6 (No Wise Person Among You?)
<b>Friday</b>	Matthew 7:24-27 (Wise and Foolish Builders)
<b>Saturday</b>	Psalm 1 (Benefits of Making the Wise Choice)
<b>Sunday</b>	Proverbs 9:1-6, 8-10, 13-18 (Wisdom Delivers Many Benefits)