

**Intro:**

Last week we began a study called “*Anatomy of a Fool*,” although ‘anatomy’ might not be quite the right descriptor.

Kidner says, “The fool meets us under various names.”<sup>1</sup>

We find three names in Pr 1.22 (two other terms for ‘fool’ in Proverbs)

Pr 1.22 “How long, O **naïve** ones, will you love being simple-minded?  
And **scoffers** delight themselves in scoffing  
And **fools** hate knowledge?”

- The naïve (simple KJV)
- The scoffer (scorner KJV)
- The fool

**Proposition:** The fool of Proverbs is a comprehensive look at man in varying degrees of spiritual antagonism to the things of God.

**I. The simple****A. Characteristics**

Gullibility (1.10), youths (1.4; 7.7), lack sense (7.7; 9.4, 16), easily seduced (7.7, 21-22), not sensible (14.15, 18), weak-willed (22.3; 27.12), heart problem (22.15), vanity (emptiness) (15.21, 12.11)

The simple can either be led (9.1-6) or misled (9.13-18)

**B. Fate of the simple without wisdom**

Pass on into foolishness (14.18), Ultimately destruction (1.32), Only cure is turning to wisdom (9.4-6)

“If [the simple] refuses [wisdom], he will graduate to a more serious condition: ‘The simple acquire folly ... but the prudent are crowned with knowledge’ (14.25), for one does not stay still: a man who is emptyheaded will end up wrongheaded.”<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Derek Kidner, *Proverbs: An Introduction and Commentary*, Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries 17 (Downers Grove, IL: Inter-Varsity Press, 1964), 36.

<sup>2</sup> Kidner, 16–17.

## II. The fool

A. Three words: כָּסִיל *k<sup>e</sup>sil*; אָוִיל *‘e<sup>e</sup>wil*; נָבַל *nabal*

1. כָּסִיל *k<sup>e</sup>sil* \_\_\_\_\_ *obstinate*

- The commonest of the three terms
- Root: ‘to be sluggish’
- “the dull or obstinate one, referring not to mental deficiency, but to a propensity to make wrong choices”<sup>3</sup>
- Kidner reminds us: “it must always be remembered that the book has in mind a man’s chosen outlook, rather than his mental equipment.”<sup>4</sup>
- Unthinking and proud of it – “he *likes* his folly”<sup>5</sup>

2. אָוִיל *‘e<sup>e</sup>wil*

- Possibly from a root meaning ‘thick’, thus ‘thick-headed’ or ‘stupid’
- There is a moral quality to this foolishness; the fool is corrupt in the sense of one who is morally deficient.
- “The feature that seems especially prominent is his *moral insolence*.”<sup>6</sup> (See 14.9, ‘fools make a mock at sin’)

3. נָבַל *nabal*

- Includes concepts found in other two words
- But also emphasizes “being ignoble and disgraceful, a downright boor. Insensibility to God, as well as a moral insensibility, close the mind to reason.”<sup>7</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Louis Goldberg, “1011 Kesil,” in *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, ed. R. Laird Harris, Gleason L. Archer, Jr., and Bruce K. Waltke (Chicago: Moody, 1980), 449.

<sup>4</sup> Kidner, *Proverbs: An Introduction and Commentary*, 37.

<sup>5</sup> Kidner, 37.

<sup>6</sup> Kidner, 38.

<sup>7</sup> Louis Goldberg, “1285 Nabal,” in *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, ed. R. Laird Harris, Gleason L. Archer, Jr., and Bruce K. Waltke (Chicago: Moody, 1980), 547.

B. Many shared characteristics [*k<sup>e</sup>sil* and *ˈe<sup>w</sup>il* respectively]1. \_\_\_\_\_ **Folly** (17.12; 26.4, 5, 11)

Pr 17.12 Let a man meet a bear robbed of her cubs, Rather than a fool in his folly.

Pr 26.4 Do not answer a fool according to his folly, Or you will also be like him.

Pr 26.5 Answer a fool as his folly deserves, That he not be wise in his own eyes.

Pr 26.11 Like a dog that returns to its vomit Is a fool who repeats his folly.

2. \_\_\_\_\_ **Despise discipline and correction** (15.5 and 15.20)

Pr 15.5 A fool rejects his father's discipline, But he who regards reproof is sensible.

Pr 15.20 A wise son makes a father glad, But a foolish man despises his mother.

3. \_\_\_\_\_ **Lack wisdom** (10.14, 21 and 14.33)

Pr 10.14 Wise men store up knowledge, But with the mouth of the foolish, ruin is at hand.

Pr 10.21 The lips of the righteous feed many, But fools die for lack of understanding.

Pr 14.33 Wisdom rests in the heart of one who has understanding, But in the hearts of fools it is made known.

4. \_\_\_\_\_ **Foolish speech** (10.8, 10, 18; 17.28; cf. 12.23; 15.2; 19.1)

Pr 10.8 The wise of heart will receive commands, But a babbling fool will be ruined.

Pr 10.10 He who winks the eye causes trouble, And a babbling fool will be ruined.

Pr 10.18 He who conceals hatred *has* lying lips, And he who spreads slander is a fool.

Pr 17.28 Even a fool, when he keeps silent, is considered wise; When he closes his lips, he is *considered* prudent.

5. Lack \_\_\_\_\_ **self-control** and are \_\_\_\_\_ **hot tempered** (12.16; 20.3 and 19.11)

Pr 12.16 A fool's anger is known at once, But a prudent man conceals dishonor.

Pr 20.3 Keeping away from strife is an honor for a man, But any fool will quarrel.

Pr 19.11 A man's discretion makes him slow to anger, And it is his glory to overlook a transgression.

6. \_\_\_\_\_ **Insolent, intractable** and \_\_\_\_\_ **incorrigible** (12.15; 24.7 and 15.14; 17.10; 18.2; 26.11)

Pr 12.15 The way of a fool is right in his own eyes, But a wise man is he who listens to counsel.

Pr 24.7 Wisdom is *too* exalted for a fool, He does not open his mouth in the gate.

Pr 15.14 The mind of the intelligent seeks knowledge, But the mouth of fools feeds on folly.

Pr 17.10 A rebuke goes deeper into one who has understanding Than a hundred blows into a fool.

Pr 18.2 A fool does not delight in understanding, But only in revealing his own mind.

Pr 26.11 Like a dog that returns to its vomit Is a fool who repeats his folly.

7. Hopelessly \_\_\_\_\_ **bound to** \_\_\_\_\_ **folly** (27.22 and 14.24; 17.10, 16; 23.9)

Pr 27.22 Though you pound a fool in a mortar with a pestle along with crushed grain, Yet his foolishness will not depart from him.

Pr 14.24 The crown of the wise is their riches, *But* the folly of fools is foolishness.

Pr 17.10 A rebuke goes deeper into one who has understanding Than a hundred blows into a fool.

Pr 17.16 Why is there a price in the hand of a fool to buy wisdom, When he has no sense?

Pr 23.9 Do not speak in the hearing of a fool, For he will despise the wisdom of your words.

8. Cannot \_\_\_\_\_ **manage** \_\_\_\_\_ **home** or \_\_\_\_\_ **money** (11.29 and 21.20)

Pr 11.29 He who troubles his own house will inherit wind, And the foolish will be servant to the wisehearted.

Pr 21.20 There is precious treasure and oil in the dwelling of the wise, But a foolish man swallows it up.

9. \_\_\_\_\_ **Punished** for their folly (10.14; 14.3 and 19.29; 26.3)

Pr 10.14 Wise men store up knowledge, But with the mouth of the foolish, ruin is at hand.

Pr 14.3 In the mouth of the foolish is a rod for *his* back, But the lips of the wise will protect them.

Pr 19.29 Judgments are prepared for scoffers, And blows for the back of fools.

Pr 26.3 A whip is for the horse, a bridle for the donkey, And a rod for the back of fools.

10. \_\_\_\_\_ **Proud**
- In the form of self-confidence: *k<sup>e</sup>sil* (28.26)
  - In the form of sneering despite at wisdom (1.7) rooted in pride (Ps 31.18; 123.4)

Pr 28.26 He who trusts in his own heart is a fool, But he who walks wisely will be delivered.

Pr 1.7 The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge; Fools despise wisdom and instruction.

Ps 31.18 Let the lying lips be mute, Which speak arrogantly against the righteous With pride and contempt.

Ps 123.4 Our soul is greatly filled With the scoffing of those who are at ease, *And* with the contempt of the proud.

Next week we will complete the category of fool with a look at *nabal* and then cover the category of the *scorner*.