

PROVERBS: THE BOOK OF WISDOM

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A. Author: Solomon, Agur, Lemuel and possibly others

B. Title: Proverbs (from Hebrew meaning “to be like”); indicated a comparison, similitude or pithy expression.

C. Theme: True wisdom comes from fearing God.

D. Outline:

a. Five Divisions of Proverbs

1. Father’s Praise of Wisdom (1-9)

- 1:1-7- Purpose of the Book
- 1:20- Personification of Wisdom
- 3:5-6- The young can acquire wisdom from the Lord
- 4:5-6- Wisdom provides security
- 5:3-5- Beware of Adultery
- 6:1-2- Beware of Rash Promises
- 7:21-22- Beware of Harlotry
- 8-9- The excellence of wisdom

2. Proverbs of Solomon (10:1-22:16)

- Series of short pithy sayings on a variety of topics
- Laziness (10:4-5,26; 15:19; 18:9; 19:24; 20:4; 22:13)
- The Tongue (15:1-2; 16:32; 18:8,13,21)
- Drunkenness (20:1)
- Pride & Boasting (11:2; 16:18-19)
- Honesty in Business (11:1; 15:27)

3. Two Groups of Words to the Wise (22:17-24:34)

- First Sayings of the Wise (22:17-24:22)
- Anger (22:22)
- Riches (22:3-4)
- Dangers of Alcohol (23:30-35)
- Building a Home (24:3-4)
- Further Sayings of the Wise (24:23-34)
- No Prejudice (24:23)
- Diligence (24:30-34)

4. Hezekiah’s Collection of Solomon’s Proverbs (25-29)

- Speech (25:11)
- Enemies (25:21-22)
- The Future (27:1)
- Confession of Sin (28:13)
- Disciplining Children (29:17)

5. Words of Agur (30)

- The Word of God (30:5-6)
- Contentment (30:7-9)

6. Words of Lemuel (31)

b. Types of Wisdom Literature in the Bible

1. Didactic Wisdom (Proverbs)

2. Reflective Wisdom (Job/Song of Solomon)

3. Accumulative Wisdom (Ecclesiastes)

E. Real Life Lessons from Proverbs:

1. True wisdom comes in fearing the Lord.
2. A relationship with the Lord affects every area of our lives.
3. God desires us to live lives of integrity and purpose.
4. Addictions of any kind destroy God’s leadership in our lives.