

The Proverbs

An Introduction

All behavior is assessed by one criterion

“IS IT WISDOM OR FOLLY?”

**THE LAW
(TORAH)**

**THE
PROPHETS**

**THE
WRITINGS**

**WISDOM
LITERATURE**

Job

Psalms

Proverbs

Ecclesiastes

Song of
Solomon

THE TITLE

Proverbs 1:1

“The proverbs of Solomon, son of David, king of Israel”

1) The Literary Form - Proverbs

A stitch in time...?

A penny saved is ...?

Look before you ...!

Hebrew word is “Masal” – to represent or to be like

They are designed to make us think before engaging

The world says: “Live and Learn!”

**Proverbs instructs us to:
“Learn and Live!”**

2) The 2nd thing we know from V:1 is where the book comes from

1 Kings 3:5: *⁵ At Gibeon the LORD appeared to Solomon in a dream by night, and God said, "Ask what I shall give you..."*

⁹ Give your servant therefore an understanding mind to govern your people, that I may discern between good and evil, for who is able to govern this your great people?

*¹⁰ It pleased the Lord that Solomon had asked this. And God said to him, "Because you have asked this... **I give you a wise and discerning mind, so that none like you has been before you and none like you shall arise after you***

THE STRUCTURE

Proverbs 1:1: *“The Proverbs of Solomon, son of David, king of Israel”*

1 – 9 - Proverbs of Solomon

10:1– 22:16 -- Proverbs of Solomon – (a different collection)

22:17 – 24:22 – Words of the Wise

24:23 – 34 -- More Sayings of the Wise

25 – 29 -- Collection of Solomon’s Proverbs by Hezekiah

30 -- Words of Agur

31 -- Words of King Lemuel

PURPOSES AND MAIN THEME

² To know wisdom and instruction, to understand words of insight, ³ to receive instruction in wise dealing, in righteousness, justice, and equity; ⁴ to give prudence to the simple, knowledge and discretion to the youth—⁵ Let the wise hear and increase in learning, and the one who understands obtain guidance, ⁶ to understand a proverb and a saying, the words of the wise and their riddles. ⁷ The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge; fools despise wisdom and instruction

PURPOSES -- CHAPTER 1 : 2 - 6

V. 2 -- Two goals of Proverbs: Build Character and Right Thinking:

“To know wisdom and instruction, to understand words of insight”

- ❖ To know Wisdom – “khokmah” – the art of godly living
- ❖ To Know Instruction – “mū-sār” – training with strong accountability
- ❖ To Understand (discern) – “bin” – This is the ability to look to the heart of an issue and realize what is at stake

V. 3 - "To receive instruction in wise dealing, in righteousness, justice, and equity"

Wise dealing is to behave towards others as God intended - In righteousness, with justice and equity (fairness)

Is it Micah 6:8?

He has told you, O man, what is good; and what does the LORD require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God

V. 4: “... to give prudence to the simple, knowledge and discretion to the youth”

- ❖ Prudence is a form of shrewdness (cleverness)**
- ❖ Knowledge; being able to see the inescapable link between actions and consequences**
- ❖ Discretion we have already defined as being wise enough to see the heart of an issue and discern what is at stake**

V. 5: “Let the wise hear and increase in learning, and the one who understands obtain guidance”

No one is ever completely disciplined!!!!

“Ignorance of God is a constant source of the errors of the heart.”

V 6: “...to understand a proverb and a saying, the words of the wise and their riddles”

“Trust in the Lord with all your heart and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make your paths straight!”

THE MAIN THEME

**THE FEAR OF THE LORD IS THE BEGINNING OF
KNOWLEDGE; FOOLS DESPISE WISDOM AND
INSTRUCTION**

If we were to distill the whole book of Proverbs into one thing, it would be the opening line of V. 7, specifically, the “Fear of the Lord.”

NEXT SESSION, FEBRUARY 22, 2024
(LORD willing!!!!)

Proverbs 9:10: *The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom, and the knowledge of the Holy One is insight*

Proverbs 15:33: *“The fear of the LORD is instruction in wisdom...”*

Job 28:28: *“...Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom, and to turn away from evil is understanding.”*