

PROVERBS

(716-687 B.C.)

A Book of Wisdom (1:7)

A proverb is a short summation or conclusion in statement form (2-4 lines) of observations from one of life's instances. It is virtually packed with a depth of hidden meaning and a wealth of truth and wisdom about life. Many proverbs are condensed parables in miniature. Each proverb needs careful reflective and personalized thinking in order to be expanded back to "life size" again. The book contains a library of moral, spiritual and practical instruction for whoever seeks God with their whole heart: (I Chron. 32:20-21). The adherence to and application of this wisdom literature insures a godly, exciting, successful, fruitful and fulfilled life here and now!

Solomon wrote most of the Proverbs. Turn to I Kings 3:3-14 and in your words retell the account recorded that states the occasion for the book.

I Kings 4:32

Throughout this book of 915 sentences, notice the contrasts between wisdom and foolishness, rewards and penalties, blessings and cursings, good and evil, value and worthlessness, intelligence and stupidity, success and failure and even life and death! Note also that because the subject matter takes in such a vast variety of life, it's truths are universal and relevant today where you are right now!

The topical subject matter contained in Proverbs can be broken down into the following categories: wisdom, righteousness, the fear of the Lord, knowledge, morality, personal discipline, self control, proper use of wealth (finances), friendships, bad companions, male and female relationships (dating), control of the tongue, quarrels, family relationships (parent to child, brother to sister, husband to wife), diligence, laziness, health, honesty, justice, types of people (prostitutes, fools, careless, disobedient, youth, old, virtuous women, wise men, righteous, wicked, greedy, rich, poor, perverted, holy, ...) helpfulness, selfishness, pride, humility, common sense, communication...it's obvious that the list could go on, and it should, because God has adequately equipped us with whatever wisdom we need to live the way He demands.

SUMMARY OUTLINE

- Book I Proverbs of Solomon - wisdom and folly contrasted, 1:1-9:18.
- Book II Sayings of Solomon (collected and organized by Solomon himself) 10:1-22:16.  
(375 proverbs)
- Book III Words of the wise, 22:17-24:34.
- Book IV Proverbs of Solomon copied by men of Hezekiah, 25:1-29:27 (119 proverbs).
- Book V Three supplementary collections, 30:1-31:31.
  - Agur's Words, 30:1-33
  - Queen Mother's Counsel to Her Son, 31:1-9.
  - The Virtuous Wife, 31:10-31.



The Purpose of Proverbs: (Prov. 1:2-6)

To know wisdom and instruction; to perceive the words of understanding;  
To receive the instruction of wisdom, justice, and judgement, and equity;  
To give subtilty to the simple, to the young man knowledge and discretion.  
A wise man will hear, and will increase learning; and a man of understanding shall attain unto wise counsels: To understand a proverb, and the interpretation; the words of the wise, and their dark sayings.

Answer the following questions thoughtfully and specifically:

1. What is the 5-fold purpose set forth in 1:2-6?

- to know -
- to discern -
- to receive -
- to give -
- to understand -

2. Where does wisdom start? (vs.7)

3. What do the following verses say about the fear of the Lord?

- Prov. 1:7
- 1:28-29
- 2:4-5
- 3:7
- 8:13
- 9:10
- 10:27
- 14:26
- 14:27
- 15:33
- 16:6
- 19:23
- 22:4
- 28:9
- 28:13-14

"The Fear of the Lord is the continual awareness that God is watching, evaluating and judging everyone of my thoughts, words, motives and actions."

- Gethard

4. In the following verses from the Book of Psalms additional insight into the fear of the Lord is revealed.

- |       |        |
|-------|--------|
| 19:9  | 103:11 |
| 22:23 | 103:13 |
| 31:19 | 103:17 |
| 33:8  | 111:5  |
| 33:18 | 111:10 |
| 34:7  | 115:11 |
| 34:9  | 115:13 |
| 60:4  | 119:63 |
| 61:5  | 145:19 |
| 85:9  | 147:11 |

5. Who is it that will ignore and despise the wisdom of God? (vs.7)

6. Where and how else does one begin to learn wisdom? (vs.8)

7. What are the consequences of rejecting wisdom and the fear of the Lord? (1:28-33)



8. What are the valuable results of wisdom from God's truth?

- 1:5a
- 1:5b
- 1:6a
- 1:6b

9. In verses 10-19, what is happening and what is the righteous response?

10. Here's How the Book Works! 2:1-4

My son, if thou wilt receive my words, and hide my commandments with thee; So that thou incline thine ear unto wisdom, and apply thine heart to understanding; Yea, if thou criest after knowledge, and liftest up thy voice for understanding; If thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasures:

- a. Memorization - "receive my words"
- b. Personalization - "lay up my commandments with Thee"
- c. Internalization - "incline thine ear unto wisdom"
- d. Application - "apply thine heart to understanding"  
Means to: "stretch out" - over life  
              "place" - specific problem  
              "abide" - maintain the application of truth
- e. Motivated by a:
  - Hunger and thirst for righteousness - "criest after knowledge"
  - Practical way to apply truth - "lift up voice for understanding"
  - Determination and persistence - "seek...and search...as for hidden treasures"
- f. The Results 2:5-11
  - understand the fear of the Lord (5)
  - find the knowledge of God (5)
 

wisdom	protection
knowledge	judgment
understanding	preservation
  - then a person will understand (9)
 

righteousness	justice
judgment	equity
  - then wisdom will enter your heart (10) as you skillfully apply it to life
    - Knowledge will be pleasant
    - Discretion will preserve you
    - Understanding will keep you (FROM WHAT?)
      1. The ways of evil men
      2. Men who speak perversely
      3. Those who leave the path of righteousness
      4. Those who rejoice to do evil
      5. Those who delight in other's evil
      6. Crooked men, dishonest (rip-off artists)
      7. Perverse men, irresponsible ones
      8. The strange woman, whores/prostitutes

CHAPTER 3

11. What specific advice comes through loud and clear to you from 3:1-6?



12. How does sin affect one's health? (7-8).
13. What promise is given to those who give to the Lord? (9-10).
14. What can you expect from the Lord? (11-12) and how should you respond?
15. What's the value of wisdom? (13-18).
16. In what way here is God's wisdom pictured? (19-20).
17. What advice and reward is repeated here? (21-26).
18. What shouldn't you do? (27-32). Have you done any of these things to those around you?
19. Where do you fit in? (33-35).

#### CHAPTER 4

20. If you want to tell your children this, you'd better get serious about it now! (1-6).
21. How can you begin to do this now? (7-10).
22. Do you really believe what this says or is it just a joke or a suggestion? (11-13).
23. What advice is here about friendships? (14-15).
24. What describes the wicked? (16-19).
25. How does Ps.119:9,11 support the same idea here? (20-21).
26. The better you live the better you feel! act right=feel right.(22).  
Your living will either lead you to health or hell!
27. How important is your inner life or being (heart)? (23). Why?
28. What's this telling you to do? (24-27). How does it apply to something you're struggling with right now? Remember "Be careful little eyes what you see?"

#### CHAPTER 5

29. From thousands who have learned the hard way through guilt, hatred, venereal disease, divorce, murder and suicide, don't ever expect to get away with sexual sin! (1-22). Control yourself now(thought life) because it doesn't get any easier - sin doesn't go away, but you can run away from it!



CHAPTER 6

30. What is the warning against questionable business involvements? (1-5).
31. What is the warning against laziness? (6-11).
32. How is a worthless person described? (12-15). Do you see yourself?
33. What does God hate? (16-19). Do you hate these things or involve yourself in it?
34. Obedience starts at home. (20-24) If you never learn it, the harder it gets. What are some of the things you are not doing that you should?
35. What are the consequences of illegitimate love? (25-35).
36. How can you avoid it?

CHAPTER 7

37. How many times do you need to be told? This seems to be an area of temptation that there can't be enough warning given. (1-27).
38. What is the picture of these who entangle themselves in this destruction?
39. What further advice is given as a motivation to avoid this area?

CHAPTER 8

40. What is wisdom clearly saying to you? (1-10).
41. What does wisdom promise? (11-13, 18-21).
42. What will wisdom enable you to do? (14-17)
43. What/who is the origin, source and person of wisdom? (22-32).
44. What are the rewards and consequences of wisdom? (33-36).



CHAPTER 9

- 45. Who is wisdom available to? (1-6).
- 46. What do you need to do to get it?
- 47. What do you need to give up?
- 48. How should you deal with, what kind of people? (7-9).
- 49. Why is wisdom beneficial? (10-12).
- 50. What kind of person is seen here again? (13-17).
- 51. What happens to the one who doesn't heed the warnings of wisdom and indulges in a life of sin? (18).

CHAPTER 10

- 52. What are the types of people mentioned here?

53. Contrast what it says about the:

Wise Person (benefits)

Evil Person (consequences)



- 54. Which side gives a description of the way you tend to be?
- 55. How can you begin today to be the kind of person God is pleased with?

CHAPTERS 11-29

There are over 500 proverbs in these chapters which are basically individual and contained nuggets of truth applying to hundreds of various areas in your life. The most beneficial study you could do is to categorize these into topical subject matters. Get all you can. There are hidden treasures that will change your life. Wisdom is to be hungered for and the more it's sought after, the more fulfilled of a person you'll be. The best thing to do is begin with some of the areas of problem in your life now, and write out the advice given about that particular area. (Areas such as speech, control, attitudes, child discipline, self control, anger, motivation, diligence, inter personal relationships...).



Another excellent and helpful way to study these chapters, as well as the whole book, is to make up your own key using different symbols or colors. That will make specific proverbs easier to find, such as:

- |                                 |  |
|---------------------------------|--|
| P - pride                       | O - poverty                            |
| * - a wise person (rewards)     | L - liars, dishonesty                  |
| X - a wicked fool (penalties)   | F - friendships                        |
| (+) positive advice "do ___"    | # - contrasts                          |
| (-) negative advice "don't ___" | !!! - what God will do about something |
| T - tongue, speech              | ( ) - types of people                  |
| \$ - money, finances, riches    | / - child discipline (a rod)           |

This is just a start - but use a creative approach and collect the most valuable beneficial thing in the world - WISDOM.

CHAPTER 30

56. What are some new areas from which "observation" has brought wisdom and insight?
57. What gets your attention in the way these proverbs are written?
58. What has been learned from nature that applies to character development in your life?

CHAPTER 31

59. What is not for people of values and priorities? (1-7).
60. How do you live effectively and significantly in life? (8-9).
61. What kind of woman should a man look for?  
What kind of woman should a girl be developing into?
62. What is this virtuous, good, morally excellent wife do with her time?

Is there anything here about spending her time in front of the TV being entertained by soap operas?



63. How is she involved?

64. What character qualities do you observe in her life?

65. How do you measure up, in principle, to this?

The constant consistent message throughout proverbs is basically "you will reap what you sow". Don't expect God's blessing and success in your life if you refuse to daily seek God's wisdom in Jesus Christ. Remember "the way of the transgressor is hard". Sin is never through with you. Consequences are life long sometimes. Only God's truth and wisdom can set us free from a miserable existence. His Word tells us what we should be, how to change into that kind of person and how to be consistent in that way. (2 Tim. 3:16-17) You should begin today!

- Memorize Proverbs 1:7
- 3:5-6
- 5:21
- 9:10
- 14:12
- 15:1
- 16:18
- 20:1
- 24:3-4
- 28:13
- 31:30

CHAPTER 31

There's only promise, fulfillment and success for those who value the wisdom from God; for those who ignore it - miserable destructive consequences.

"Blessed are they who do hunger and thirst after righteousness for they shall be filled."

- Jesus Christ