

THE BOOK OF PROVERBS

HANDBOOK

Compiled by Dr. Chuck Missler



Koinonia House

Acknowledgments

These notes have been assembled from speaking notes and related materials which had been compiled from a number of classic and contemporary commentaries and other sources detailed in the bibliography, as well as other articles and publications of Koinonia House. While we have attempted to include relevant end notes and other references, we apologize for any errors or oversights.

The complete recordings of the sessions, as well as supporting diagrams, maps, etc., are also available in various audiovisual formats from the publisher.

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The Book of Proverbs Session 1

Chapters 1 - 4

Wisdom Literature

- Old Testament:
 - Proverbs
 - Ecclesiastes
 - Song of Songs
 - Job
 - Psalms 19, 37, 104, 107, 147, & 148
- For more on the nature of wisdom
 - O.T.: 2 Chronicles 1
 - N.T.: 1 Corinthians 1; James 3

The Book of Proverbs

- Proverbs is God's book on "How to wise up and live."
 - Beyond keeping laws.
 - Focuses on leading an aggressively dynamic life.
 - Proper and improper attitudes, conduct, and characteristics are referred to in succinct, penetrating ways.

"Proverb"

- מִשְׁלָּה *mashal*
 - Proverb, parable; a comparison; aphorism; sentences of ethical wisdom, ethical maxims.
- Short sentences from long experience.
 - Easy to remember.
 - Condense much wisdom in a small space.

Homespun Examples

- "When the well is dry we know the worth of water."
- "When you want a drink of milk, you don't buy the whole cow."
- "The cat would eat fish, but she doesn't want to get her feet wet."

Always do right—this will gratify some and astonish the rest.

Mark Twain

President Harry S. Truman liked that quotation so much he had it framed and placed on the wall behind his desk in the Oval Office.

Authorship

Solomon lived five hundred years before the “seven wise men” of Greece, and seven hundred before the age of Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle.

Solomon

- Wrote 3,000 proverbs (1 Kings 4:32).
- Was the wisest person in his day (1 Kings 4:29-44).
- Since Solomon reigned from 971 to 931, the Proverbs he wrote may be dated in the 10th century.
- Chapters 25-29 were written by Solomon but were compiled by men of Hezekiah (Prov 25:1) Since Hezekiah reigned from 729 to 686.

Divinely Authorized

- God is the Author of all Scripture (2 Tim. 3:16).

All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness.

2 Timothy 3:16

θεόπνευστος = God-breathed.

“All Scripture is . . . profitable” in four ways: for *doctrine*—what’s right; for *reproof*—what’s not right; for *correction*—how to get right; and for *instruction in righteousness*—how to stay right.

Addressees

- The words “my son” were written by Solomon 15 times in Chapters 1-7 and twice elsewhere (19:27; 27:11).
 - They are used 5 times in the sayings of the wise men (23:15, 19; 23:26; 24:13, 21) and once by Lemuel’s mother (31:2).
- “My sons” occurs 4 times, all by Solomon. (4:1; 5:7; 7:24; 8:32). This could be a term for students.

New Testament Quotes

Rom 3:15	Prov 1:16
Heb 12:5–6	Prov 3:11–12
Rev 3:19	Prov 3:11–12
James 4:6	Prov 3:34

1 Pet 5:5	Prov 3:34
Rom 12:20	Prov 25:21–22
2 Pet 2:22	Prov 26:11

Wisdom

- Traditional definition:
 - “The ability to use knowledge in the right way.”
- Biblical:
 - There is a “wisdom of this world” 1 Cor 2:1-8; James 3:13-18.
 - Divine wisdom is from above: Jesus Christ is the Wisdom of God Prov 8:22–31; 1 Cor 1:24,30; Col 2:3.

The key word! Yet wisdom means so much more. True wisdom is a matter of the heart and not the mind alone.

חִכְמָה **Chokmah, Wisdom**

- It occurs 45 times in Proverbs:
 - Being knowledgeable, experienced, and efficient in their areas of expertise.
- Wisdom in Proverbs includes:
 - practical sagacity, mental acumen, and functional skill, but it also includes moral, upright living which stems from a right relationship with the Lord.
- “The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom” (Proverbs 9:10).
 - Makes the Hebrew concept of wisdom unique (Cf. 14:16, 1:7; 15:33; Job 28:28; Ps 111:10).
- To be wise in the Biblical sense one must begin with a proper relationship to God.

Wisdom means so much more. If we want to live wisely, *we must begin with commitment to Jesus Christ*, who is “the wisdom of God” (1 Cor 1:30).

- Wisdom is described as:

– Eternal	Prov 8:22–26
– The Creator of all things	Prov 8:27–29
– The Beloved of God	Prov 8:30–31
- To yield your life to Christ and obey Him is true wisdom (Jn 1:1-2; Col 1:15-19).

Contradictions

- “Look before you leap.”
“He who hesitates is lost.”
“A man gets no more than he pays for.”
“The best things in life are free.”
“Leave well enough alone.”
“Progress never stands still.”
“Many hands make light work.”
“Too many cooks spoil the broth.”
“A rolling stone gathers no moss.”
“A setting hen does not get fat.”

Man’s views are often contradictory... not so in Proverbs.

Guides for Study

- They are organized (Eccl 12:9).
- They are thumbnails of every character in the Bible...
- Read the “date” chapter each day (there are 31 chapters)...

Parallelism of Ideas

Hebrew poetry does not have rhyme or meter as our poetry does.
Hebrew poetry consists of a parallelism of ideas.

- Synonymous Parallelism
- Antithetic (Contrast) Parallelism
- Synthetic Parallelism

1. Synonymous Parallelism

The second clause restates what is given in the first clause:

Judgments are prepared for scorners, And stripes for the back of fools
Proverbs 19:29

It expresses the same thought in a different way. Sometimes every unit in one line is matched in the next line (e.g., 1:2; 2:11). This is called *complete synonymous parallelism*. Other times only some of the units in one line are matched in the next line (e.g., in 1:9 the words “They will be” are not matched in the second line). This is called *incomplete synonymous parallelism*.

2. Antithetic (Contrast) Parallelism

A truth, which is stated in the first clause, is made stronger in the second clause by contrast with an opposite truth:

The light of the righteous rejoiceth, But the lamp of the wicked shall be put out.

Proverbs 13:9

You can see that the second statement is stating the same truth but from the opposite point of view by way of contrast. Most of the verses in Chapters 10-15 are antithetical.

3. Synthetic Parallelism

The second clause develops the thought of the first:

The terror of a king is as the roaring of a lion; He that provoketh him to anger sinneth against his own life.

Proverbs 20:2

In *synthetic parallelism* the second line simply continues the thought of the first line. Sometimes the second line gives a result of the first line (3:6; 16:3) and other times the second line describes something in the first line (6:12; 15:3).

Sometimes one line gives a preference over what is referred to in the other line. There are 19 such “better . . . than” verses (12:9; 15:16-17; 16:8, 16, 19, 32; 17:1, 12; 19:1, 22; 21:9, 19; 22:1; 25:7, 24; 27:5, 10; 28:6). “How much worse” or “how much more” is another kind of synthetic parallelism (11:31; 15:11; 17:7; 19:7, 10; 21:27). Most of the verses in 16:1-22:16 have either synonymous or synthetic parallelism.

Outline of the Book of Proverbs

- | | |
|---|-------|
| • Wisdom and Folly Contrasted | 1–9 |
| • Proverbs of Solomon
(<i>Written and set in order by himself</i>) | 10–24 |
| • Proverbs of Solomon
(<i>Set in order by men of Hezekiah</i>) | 25–29 |
| • Oracle of Agur | 30 |
| • Proverbs of Lemuel’s Mother | 31 |

Three Losers

- Three classes of people who desperately need wisdom (Prov 1:22): the Scornor; the Fool; and the Simple.

The Scorners

- Scorners mock at God's wisdom:
 - because it is too high for them (Prov 14:6).
 - but they will not admit it because they know everything (Prov 21:24).
- The Hebrew word for “scorner” literally means “to make a mouth”; and we can easily picture them sneering and curling up their lips in scorn.
- They never profit from rebuke (Prov 9:7-8; 13:1) and, as a result,
- They will one day be judged (Prov 19:29).

The Fool

- The person who is dense, sluggish, careless, and self-satisfied:
 - *Nabal* (“fool”) is a good example (1 Sam 25)
- The Fool
 - hates instruction Prov 1:7,22
 - is self-confident Prov 12:15
 - talks without thinking Prov 29:11
 - mocks at sin Prov 14:9

The Simple

- The Simple are those who believe everything and everybody and lack discernment (Prov 14:15).
- They are easily led astray by others and lack understanding (Prov 7:7).
- They cannot see ahead and, as a result, repeatedly walk into trouble. (Prov 22:3).

The Wise

- Listen to instruction Prov 1:5
- Obey what they hear Prov 10:8
- Store up what they learn Prov 10:14
- Win others to the Lord Prov 11:30
- Flee from sin Prov 14:16
- Watch their tongue Prov 16:23
- Are diligent in their daily work Prov 10:5

Wisdom & Folly

Consider Wisdom and Folly, the two “women” who are out to woo and win the hearts of people. (The Hebrew word for wisdom is in the feminine gender.)

- Three calls from Wisdom and three from Folly
 - Wisdom calls us to God and life.
 - Folly calls us to sin and judgment.
- Wisdom’s 1st Call: Salvation (Prov 1:20-33)
 - was to the Scorned, the Fool, and the Simple.
- Wisdom’s 2nd Call: Wealth
 - was only to the Fool and the Simple.
- Wisdom’s 3rd Call: Life
 - is only to the Simple.
- Folly’s 1st call: to Condemnation.
- Folly’s 2nd call: to Poverty.
- Folly’s 3rd call: to Death.

The Results

- **The Scorned**
 - rejected Wisdom and met destruction (Prov 1:24–27).
 - listened to Folly and received destruction (Prov 6:32).
- **The Fool**
 - rejected Wisdom and was led to death (Prov 8:36).
 - he listened to Folly and received death (Prov 5:22,23).
- **The Simple**
 - rejected Wisdom and went to hell (Prov 9:18).
 - he listened to Folly and ended up in hell (Prov 7:27).

Proverbs 1

- 1] The proverbs of Solomon the son of David, king of Israel;
- 2] To know wisdom and instruction; to perceive the words of understanding;
- 3] To receive the instruction of wisdom, justice, and judgment, and equity;
- 4] To give subtilty to the simple, to the young man knowledge and discretion.
- 5] A wise *man* will hear, and will increase learning; and a man of understanding shall attain unto wise counsels:
- 6] To understand a proverb, and the interpretation; the words of the wise, and their dark sayings.

Solomon loved “dark sayings.”

Enigmatic Style

I will open my mouth in a parable: I will utter dark sayings of old: Which we have heard and known, and our fathers have told us

Psalm 78:2,3

Purpose (Proverbs 1:2-4, 6)

- For attaining wisdom and discipline.
 - For understanding words of insight.
 - For acquiring a disciplined and prudent life.
 - For giving prudence to the simple.
 - For understanding proverbs, parables, sayings and riddles of the wise.
- 7] The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge: but fools despise wisdom and instruction.
- 8] My son, hear the instruction of thy father, and forsake not the law of thy mother:
- 9] For they shall be an ornament of grace unto thy head, and chains about thy neck.
- 10] My son, if sinners entice thee, consent thou not.
- 11] If they say, Come with us, let us lay wait for blood, let us lurk privily for the innocent without cause:
- 12] Let us swallow them up alive as the grave; and whole, as those that go down into the pit:
- 13] We shall find all precious substance, we shall fill our houses with spoil:
- 14] Cast in thy lot among us; let us all have one purse:
- 15] My son, walk not thou in the way with them; refrain thy foot from their path:
- 16] For their feet run to evil, and make haste to shed blood.
- 17] Surely in vain the net is spread in the sight of any bird.
- 18] And they lay wait for their own blood; they lurk privily for their own lives.
- 19] So are the ways of every one that is greedy of gain; which taketh away the life of the owners thereof.
- 20] Wisdom crieth without; she uttereth her voice in the streets:
- 21] She crieth in the chief place of concourse, in the openings of the gates: in the city she uttereth her words, saying,
- 22] How long, ye simple ones, will ye love simplicity? and the scorers delight in their scorning, and fools hate knowledge?
- 23] Turn you at my reproof: behold, I will pour out my spirit unto you, I will make known my words unto you.

Wisdom & Folly

- Three calls from Wisdom and three from Folly
 - Wisdom calls us to God and life.
 - Folly calls us to sin and judgment.
- Wisdom's 1st Call: Salvation (Prov 1:20-33)
 - was to the Fool, the Scorer, and the Simple.

- Wisdom's 2nd Call: Wealth
– was only to the Fool and the Simple.
- Wisdom's 3rd Call: Life
– is only to the Simple.

- 24] Because I have called, and ye refused; I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded;
25] But ye have set at nought all my counsel, and would none of my reproof:
26] I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh;
27] When your fear cometh as desolation, and your destruction cometh as a whirlwind; when distress and anguish cometh upon you.

The Results

- **The Scornor**
 - rejected Wisdom and met destruction. 1:24-27
 - listened to Folly and received destruction. 6:32
- **The Fool**
 - rejected Wisdom and was led to death. 8:36
 - he listened to Folly and received death. 5:22,23
- **The Simple**
 - rejected Wisdom and went to hell. 9:18
 - he listened to Folly and ended up in hell. 7:27

- 28] Then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer; they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me:
29] For that they hated knowledge, and did not choose the fear of the LORD:
30] They would none of my counsel: they despised all my reproof.
31] Therefore shall they eat of the fruit of their own way, and be filled with their own devices.
32] For the turning away of the simple shall slay them, and the prosperity of fools shall destroy them.
33] But whoso hearkeneth unto me shall dwell safely, and shall be quiet from fear of evil.

The Path of Wisdom

Following Wisdom's first call we have three chapters that present the path of wisdom. The words "path" and "way" are each used 13 times in these chapters.

Chapter 2

- Wisdom *protects* our paths (Prov 2:8).

Chapter 3

- Wisdom *directs* our paths (Prov 3:5-6).

Chapter 4

– Wisdom *perfects* our paths (Prov 4:18).

Proverbs 2

- 1] My son, if thou wilt receive my words, and hide my commandments with thee;
- 2] So that thou incline thine ear unto wisdom, *and* apply thine heart to understanding;
- 3] Yea, if thou criest after knowledge, *and* liftest up thy voice for understanding;
- 4] If thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as *for* hid treasures;
- 5] Then shalt thou understand the fear of the LORD, and find the knowledge of God.

Wisdom

There are a great many brilliant people who have knowledge; yet they lack wisdom:

- In the Scriptures:
 - Means “the ability to use knowledge properly.”
 - Occurs in this book alone 37 times.
 - Means Jesus Christ for the believer today:

But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption?.

1 Corinthians 1:30

- 6] For the LORD giveth wisdom: out of his mouth *cometh* knowledge and understanding.
- 7] He layeth up sound wisdom for the righteous: *he is* a buckler to them that walk uprightly.
- 8] He keepeth the paths of judgment, and preserveth the way of his saints.
- 9] Then shalt thou understand righteousness, and judgment, and equity; *yea*, every good path.
- 10] When wisdom entereth into thine heart, and knowledge is pleasant unto thy soul;
- 11] Discretion shall preserve thee, understanding shall keep thee:
- 12] To deliver thee from the way of the evil *man*, from the man that speaketh froward things;
- 13] Who leave the paths of uprightness, to walk in the ways of darkness;
- 14] Who rejoice to do evil, *and* delight in the frowardness of the wicked;
- 15] Whose ways *are* crooked, and *they* froward in their paths:
- 16] To deliver thee from the strange woman, *even* from the stranger *which* flattereth with her words;
- 17] Which forsaketh the guide of her youth, and forgetteth the covenant of her God.
- 18] For her house inclineth unto death, and her paths unto the dead.
- 19] None that go unto her return again, neither take they hold of the paths of life.
- 20] That thou mayest walk in the way of good *men*, and keep the paths of the righteous.
- 21] For the upright shall dwell in the land, and the perfect shall remain in it.

- 22] But the wicked shall be cut off from the earth, and the transgressors shall be rooted out of it.

Proverbs 3

The Path of Wisdom

Chapter 2: Wisdom *protects* our paths (Prov 2:8).

Chapter 3: Wisdom *directs* our paths (Prov 3:5-6).

Chapter 4: Wisdom *perfects* our paths (Prov 4:18).

- 1] My son, forget not my law; but let thine heart keep my commandments:
- 2] For length of days, and long life, and peace, shall they add to thee.
- 3] Let not mercy and truth forsake thee: bind them about thy neck; write them upon the table of thine heart:
- 4] So shalt thou find favour and good understanding in the sight of God and man.

Proverbs 3:5,6 is a popular memory verse...and a key challenge and promise!

- 5] Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding.
- 6] In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.
- 7] Be not wise in thine own eyes: fear the LORD, and depart from evil.
- 8] It shall be health to thy navel, and marrow to thy bones.
- 9] Honour the LORD with thy substance, and with the firstfruits of all thine increase:
- 10] So shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine.

The key Hebrew word for discipline is *yasar*, which means to chastise, or to instruct. It does involve correction, but its goal is to make a positive contribution to a person's training in righteousness. As these verses emphasize, *yasar* is exercised in a family setting. We get it backwards: we discipline criminals and punish our children.

- 11] My son, despise not the chastening of the LORD; neither be weary of his correction:
- 12] For whom the LORD loveth he correcteth; even as a father the son *in whom* he delighteth.
- 13] Happy *is* the man *that* findeth wisdom, and the man *that* getteth understanding.
- 14] For the merchandise of *it* is better than the merchandise of silver, and the gain thereof than fine gold.
- 15] She *is* more precious than rubies: and all the things thou canst desire are not to be compared unto her.

Do you believe it? What are you doing to prove it? What are your priorities?

- 16] Length of days *is* in her right hand; *and* in her left hand riches and honour.
17] Her ways *are* ways of pleasantness, and all her paths *are* peace.
18] She *is* a tree of life to them that lay hold upon her: and happy *is every one* that retaineth her.
19] The LORD by wisdom hath founded the earth; by understanding hath he established the heavens.
20] By his knowledge the depths are broken up, and the clouds drop down the dew.
21] My son, let not them depart from thine eyes: keep sound wisdom and discretion:
22] So shall they be life unto thy soul, and grace to thy neck.
23] Then shalt thou walk in thy way safely, and thy foot shall not stumble.
24] When thou liest down, thou shalt not be afraid: yea, thou shalt lie down, and thy sleep shall be sweet.
25] Be not afraid of sudden fear, neither of the desolation of the wicked, when it cometh.
26] For the LORD shall be thy confidence, and shall keep thy foot from being taken.
27] Withhold not good from them to whom it is due, when it is in the power of thine hand to do *it*.

Verse 27 literally means, “Do not withhold good from its owners.”

- 28] Say not unto thy neighbour, Go, and come again, and to morrow I will give; when thou hast it by thee.
29] Devise not evil against thy neighbour, seeing he dwelleth securely by thee.
30] Strive not with a man without cause, if he have done thee no harm.
31] Envy thou not the oppressor, and choose none of his ways.
32] For the froward *is* abomination to the LORD: but his secret *is* with the righteous.
33] The curse of the LORD *is* in the house of the wicked: but he blesseth the habitation of the just.
34] Surely he scorneth the scorners: but he giveth grace unto the lowly.
35] The wise shall inherit glory: but shame shall be the promotion of fools.

Proverbs 4

The Path of Wisdom

Chapter 2

– Wisdom *protects* our paths (Prov 2:8).

Chapter 3

– Wisdom *directs* our paths (Prov 3:5-6).

Chapter 4

– Wisdom *perfects* our paths (Prov 4:18).

Following Wisdom’s first call we have three chapters that present the path of wisdom. The words “path” and “way” are each used 13 times in these chapters.

Solomon spoke of his boyhood when his parents David and Bathsheba taught him. He was then their only child though later he had three brothers (1 Chr 3:5).

- 1] Hear, ye children, the instruction of a father, and attend to know understanding.
- 2] For I give you good doctrine, forsake ye not my law.
- 3] For I was my father's son, tender and only *beloved* in the sight of my mother.
- 4] He taught me also, and said unto me, Let thine heart retain my words: keep my commandments, and live.

Proverbs 4:4b-9 is a quote from Solomon's father David. By quoting these words Solomon was passing the instruction on to his sons. The three generations involved here illustrate Deuteronomy 6:2. David had urged young Solomon to obey his words wholeheartedly (with all your heart; cf. Prov 3:5).

- 5] Get wisdom, get understanding: forget *it* not; neither decline from the words of my mouth.
- 6] Forsake her not, and she shall preserve thee: love her, and she shall keep thee.
- 7] Wisdom *is* the principal thing; *therefore* get wisdom: and with all thy getting get understanding.
- 8] Exalt her, and she shall promote thee: she shall bring thee to honour, when thou dost embrace her.
- 9] She shall give to thine head an ornament of grace: a crown of glory shall she deliver to thee.
- 10] Hear, O my son, and receive my sayings; and the years of thy life shall be many.
- 11] I have taught thee in the way of wisdom; I have led thee in right paths.
- 12] When thou goest, thy steps shall not be straitened; and when thou runnest, thou shalt not stumble.
- 13] Take fast hold of instruction; let *her* not go: keep her; for she *is* thy life.
- 14] Enter not into the path of the wicked, and go not in the way of evil *men*.
- 15] Avoid it, pass not by it, turn from it, and pass away.
- 16] For they sleep not, except they have done mischief; and their sleep is taken away, unless they cause *some* to fall.
- 17] For they eat the bread of wickedness, and drink the wine of violence.
- 18] But the path of the just *is* as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.
- 19] The way of the wicked *is* as darkness: they know not at what they stumble.
- 20] My son, attend to my words; incline thine ear unto my sayings.
- 21] Let them not depart from thine eyes; keep them in the midst of thine heart.
- 22] For they *are* life unto those that find them, and health to all their flesh.
- 23] Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it *are* the issues of life.

William Harvey back in the seventeenth century discovered the circulation of the blood, which revolutionized medical science. Yet here in Proverbs, which was written about 2,700 years earlier, there is a recognition of the importance of the heart for the maintenance of life. And the

heart symbolizes the center of one's innermost being. The Lord Jesus said that it isn't what goes into a man that defiles him, but what comes out of a man.

For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies.

Matthew 15:19

- 24] Put away from thee a froward mouth, and perverse lips put far from thee.
- 25] Let thine eyes look right on, and let thine eyelids look straight before thee.
- 26] Ponder the path of thy feet, and let all thy ways be established.
- 27] Turn not to the right hand nor to the left: remove thy foot from evil.

Summary

- ***We cannot avoid decisions***
 - “Decision determines destiny.”
 - We choose either the path of Wisdom or the path of Folly; we cannot postpone this decision or avoid it.
 - To choose one is to reject the other; to reject one is to choose the other.
 - What decision have *you* made?
- ***Sin is always alluring***
 - Folly does everything she can to make sin attractive
 - She never reveals her true nature; she never tells people that her house is the way to hell
 - The only way to detect Folly is to walk with Wisdom
Prov 2:10–22
 - Those who walk with Wisdom, obeying the Word of God, will not easily be tricked by Folly
- ***It takes time for judgment to fall***
 - The simple, the fool, and the scorner all thought they “had it made” when they rejected Wisdom, because nothing disastrous immediately happened.
 - But judgment eventually caught up with them.

Whatever a man sows, that he will also reap.

Galatians 6:7

- ***Satan appeals to the flesh***
 - The “wicked woman” (or “strange woman”) is appealing to the young man's appetites. She tells him he can use his body as he pleases and not suffer for it.
 - Sexual sin leads to tragic results, both in body and soul.

- **God continues to call**
 - So long as people will hear, God's Spirit continues to call. But when sinners refuse to obey, their ears become deaf to the Word of God. Beware!

Today, if you will hear His voice, do not harden your hearts.

Hebrews 3:7ff

In these days of flagrant immorality (in movies, TV, music, advertising, etc.), it is important that young and old people keep their hearts and minds pure.

Next Session

- Read Proverbs Chapters 1 - 9.
- Who do you know who fits these descriptions?
 - In the Bible?
 - Personally?
- Begin a daily program of reading the “date” chapter of Proverbs...

Wisdom & Folly

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- **The Simple**
 - rejected Wisdom and went to hell (Prov 9:18).
 - he listened to Folly and ended up in hell (Prov 7:27).

The Book of Proverbs Session 2

Chapters 5 - 9

Review

What is your most important stewardship? Your career? Your family? Your spouse? *Your Heart!*

Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life.

Proverbs 4:23

William Harvey back in the 17th century discovered the circulation of the blood, which revolutionized medical science. Yet here in Proverbs, which was written about 2,700 years earlier, there is a recognition of the importance of the heart for the maintenance of life. The heart symbolizes the center of one's innermost being. The Lord Jesus said that it isn't what goes into a man that defiles him, but what comes out of a man. "For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies" (Mt 15:19).

The Book of Proverbs

Proverbs is God's book on "How to wise up and live." Beyond keeping laws, it focuses on leading an aggressively dynamic life. Proper and improper attitudes, conduct, and characteristics are referred to in succinct, penetrating ways

Divinely Authorized

All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness.

2 Timothy 3:16

Outline of the Book of Proverbs

- Wisdom and Folly Contrasted Prov 1–9
- Proverbs of Solomon Prov 10–24
(*Written and set in order by himself*)

THE BOOK OF PROVERBS

- Proverbs of Solomon Prov 25–29
(Set in order by men of Hezekiah)
- Oracle of Agur Prov 30
- Proverbs of Lemuel's Mother Prov 31

Three Losers

There are three classes of people who desperately need wisdom (Prov 1:22): the Scornor, the Fool, and the Simple.

The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge: but fools despise wisdom and instruction.

Proverbs 1:7

Wisdom

In Proverbs this word occurs 37 times! Wisdom means Jesus Christ for the believer today:

But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption.

1 Corinthians 1:30

Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths. Be not wise in thine own eyes: fear the LORD, and depart from evil. It shall be health to thy navel, and marrow to thy bones.

Proverbs 3:5-8

Ponder the path of thy feet, and let all thy ways be established. Turn not to the right hand nor to the left: remove thy foot from evil.

Proverbs 4:26, 27

Looking ahead to see where your actions will lead you (Cf. 5:11; 14:12–14; 16:25; 19:20; 20:21; 23:17–18, 32; 24:14, 20; 25:8). ***The wise person checks on the destination before buying a ticket*** (4:26)!

Proverbs 5: Sexual Purity

God invented sex and has every right to tell us how to use it properly.

Thou shall not commit adultery.

Exodus 20:14

This includes the sexual sins prohibited elsewhere in Scripture (Lev 18; Rom 1:18-32; 1 Cor 6:9-20; Eph 5:1-14). Our Lord spoke of

“fornications” (plural) in Matthew 15:19. The Council at Jerusalem mentioned “fornication,” and included the sexual sins condemned by the Law of Moses (Acts 15:20; Lev 18). The words “adultery” and “fornication” are *inclusive* of the various forms of sexual sins.

- 1] My son, attend unto my wisdom, *and* bow thine ear to my understanding:
- 2] That thou mayest regard discretion, and *that* thy lips may keep knowledge.
- 3] For the lips of a strange woman drop *as* an honeycomb, and her mouth *is* smoother than oil:
- 4] But her end is bitter as wormwood, sharp as a twoedged sword.

This is the kind of sex education that God gives. God is saying that a pure life should be led for the sake of the home later on. A lot of the problems in our homes today don't begin there: *they began way back in the premarital sex life of the individual.*

- 5] Her feet go down to death; her steps take hold on hell.
- 6] Lest thou shouldest ponder the path of life, her ways are moveable, *that* thou canst not know *them*.

Better translation: “her ways are varied, so as to prevent your knowledge of her true character, and so of true happiness.”

- 7] Hear me now therefore, O ye children, and depart not from the words of my mouth.
- 8] Remove thy way far from her, and come not nigh the door of her house:
- 9] Lest thou give thine honour unto others, and thy years unto the cruel:

[We've met “the strange woman” before (Prov 2:16) and she'll be mentioned again (Prov 5:20; 6:24; 7:5; 20:16; 22:14; 23:27; 27:13).]

- 10] Lest strangers be filled with thy wealth; and thy labours *be* in the house of a stranger;
- 11] And thou mourn at the last, when thy flesh and thy body are consumed,
- 12] And say, How have I hated instruction, and my heart despised reproof;
- 13] And have not obeyed the voice of my teachers, nor inclined mine ear to them that instructed me!

Venereal disease has reached epidemic proportions.

- 14] I was almost in all evil in the midst of the congregation and assembly.
- 15] Drink waters out of thine own cistern, and running waters out of thine own well.
- 16] Let thy fountains be dispersed abroad, *and* rivers of waters in the streets.
- 17] Let them be only thine own, and not strangers' with thee.

Your offspring should be from your wife, not from a stranger.

- 18] Let thy fountain be blessed: and rejoice with the wife of thy youth.

- 19] *Let her be as the loving hind and pleasant roe; let her breasts satisfy thee at all times; and be thou ravished always with her love.*

Other figures for a wife from the well-known beauty of these animals. Ravished: literally, “intoxicated,” that is, fully satisfied.

- 20] And why wilt thou, my son, be ravished with a strange woman, and embrace the bosom of a stranger?

He didn’t put the “marriage wall” around sex to *rob* us of pleasure but to *increase* pleasure and *protect* it. Solomon explains the disappointments that come when people violate God’s loving laws of sexual purity. Do you notice how God describes physical love in marriage? God lifts it to the very highest plane. Remember that marriage was designed by God Himself and was given to the human family for the welfare and good of mankind. A part of the immorality of our day is the attempts to get rid of marriage.

- 21] For the ways of man *are* before the eyes of the LORD, and he pondereth all his goings.

“God loves you so much He can’t take His eyes off of you!”

- 22] His own iniquities shall take the wicked himself, and he shall be holden with the cords of his sins.
23] He shall die without instruction; and in the greatness of his folly he shall go astray.

No jury at the White Throne Judgment! (Rev 20:11–15; 21:27; 22:15.)

Sexual Sin Will Disappoint

- The experience goes from sweetness to bitterness vv. 1–6
- From gain to loss vv. 7–14
- From purity to pollution vv. 15–20
- From freedom to bondage vv. 21–23

Sweetness to Bitterness

The Book of Proverbs emphasizes the importance of *looking ahead* to see where your actions will lead you (Cf. 5:11; 14:12–14; 16:25; 19:20; 20:21; 23:17–18, 32; 24:14, 20; 25:8). The wise person checks on the destination before buying a ticket (4:26), but modern society thinks that people can violate God’s laws and escape the consequences.

Gain to Loss

Temptation always includes hopeful promises; otherwise, people wouldn't take the devil's bait. *Sin is the most expensive thing in the world.* God in His **grace** will forgive his sins if he repents, but God in His **government** sees to it that he reaps what he sows.

Purity to Pollution

Sex within marriage is a beautiful river that brings life and refreshment, but sex outside marriage is a sewer that defiles everything it touches. When a husband and wife obey Scriptures like 1 Corinthians 7:1-5 and Ephesians 5:22-33, neither of them will look for satisfaction anywhere else.

Freedom to Bondage

The kind of bondage which can't easily be broken (Jn 8:34; Rom 6:16). God's children have the responsibility to represent their Father's name. "Marriage is honorable among all, and the bed undefiled; but fornicators and adulterers God will judge" (Heb 13:4).

Proverbs 6: Good Business Principles

- 1] My son, if thou be surety for thy friend, *if* thou hast stricken thy hand with a stranger,
- 2] Thou art snared with the words of thy mouth, thou art taken with the words of thy mouth.

Two things which are good advice any time: Beware of signing a friend's note. And never become a partner with a stranger. The fellow apparently has been boasting; he wants to appear outstanding in the financial realm: we are to beware of that.

- 3] Do this now, my son, and deliver thyself, when thou art come into the hand of thy friend; go, humble thyself, and make sure thy friend.
- 4] Give not sleep to thine eyes, nor slumber to thine eyelids.
- 5] Deliver thyself as a roe from the hand *of the hunter*, and as a bird from the hand of the fowler.

The first law of holes: stop digging! Have you made a financial mistake? Cut your losses—now.

- 6] Go to the ant, thou sluggard; consider her ways, and be wise:
- 7] Which having no guide, overseer, or ruler,
- 8] Provideth her meat in the summer, *and* gathereth her food in the harvest.

The ant is a great example: *diligence* in preparing for the winter, without supervision...

- 9] How long wilt thou sleep, O sluggard? when wilt thou arise out of thy sleep?
- 10] *Yet* a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep:
- 11] So shall thy poverty come as one that travelleth, and thy want as an armed man.
- 12] A naughty person, a wicked man, walketh with a froward mouth.
- 13] He winketh with his eyes, he speaketh with his feet, he teacheth with his fingers;
- 14] Frowardness *is* in his heart, he deviseth mischief continually; he soweth discord.
- 15] Therefore shall his calamity come suddenly; suddenly shall he be broken without remedy.

A description of a wicked man, a son of Belial. “Frowardness” is perverseness. Everything he says has a double meaning. Notice that he “soweth” or casts forth discord. God desires a holy life: *because He is holy!*

- 16] These six *things* doth the LORD hate: yea, seven *are* an abomination unto him:
- 17] A proud look, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood,
- 18] An heart that deviseth wicked imaginations, feet that be swift in running to mischief,
- 19] A false witness *that* speaketh lies, and he that soweth discord among brethren.

God hates?! God loves good, but hates evil. Seven = number of completeness. ***They are all the works of the flesh.*** They are things that reveal the total depravity and the utter degradation of the human species.

- “A time to love, and a time to hate?” (Eccl 3:8).
- “Neither shalt thou set thee up any image; which the Lord thy God hateth?” (Deut 16:22).
- “Thou lovest righteousness, and hatest wickedness?” (Ps 45:7)
- But this thou hast, that thou hatest the deeds of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate?” (Rev 2:6).

God's Hate List

- 1) **A proud look (“Eyes of loftiness”):** “Look on every one that is proud, and bring him low; and tread down the wicked in their place (Job 40:12).

#1 on His list: He puts it ahead of murder and ahead of drunkenness!
Origin of pride: Satan...

*I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God:
I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north:
I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High.*

Isaiah 14:13,14

- 2) **A lying tongue:** “I said in my haste, All men are liars?” (Ps 116:11); “Deliver my soul, O Lord, from lying lips, and from a deceitful tongue?” (Ps 120:2); “Behold, thou desirest **Truth** in the inward parts: and in the hidden part thou shalt make me to know wisdom?” (Ps 51:6); “Into thine hand I commit my spirit: thou hast redeemed me, O Lord God of **Truth**?” (Ps 31:5).

There is far more said throughout the Bible about the abuse of the tongue than is said about the abuse of alcohol! The abuse of the tongue is something that is common to all races and all languages.

3) **Hands that shed innocent blood:**

God says the murderer should be punished because he took that which God said is sacred—the human life. The popular idea today is completely opposite. After a man has been killed the murderer is brought to trial, then suddenly *the murderer’s life* is considered to be precious. God says that human life is precious and that when a murderer kills a man, he is to forfeit his own life. Capital punishment is the teaching of the Word of God.

- 4) **A heart that devises wicked imaginations:** “For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies.” (Mt 15:19).

The Lord Jesus said, “It is an ugly brood that comes out of the human heart.” By the way, have you ever confessed to God what you have in your mind and in your heart? We all need to do that. We need to be cleansed.

- 5) **Feet swiftly running to mischief:** “Their feet run to evil, and they make haste to shed innocent blood: their thoughts are thoughts of iniquity; wasting and destruction are in their paths” (Isa 59:7).

God is dealing with the anatomy of evil and iniquity. It includes the eyes, the tongues, the hands, the heart, and the feet.

- 6) **A false witness that speaketh lies:** More on this later.

- 7) **He that sows discord among brethren:** “Only by pride cometh contention: but with the well advised is wisdom.” (Prov 13:10); “A fool’s lips enter into contention, and his mouth calleth for strokes.” (Prov 18:6); “Cast out the scorner, and contention shall go out; yea, strife and reproach shall cease.” (Prov 22:10).

20] My son, keep thy father’s commandment, and forsake not the law of thy mother:

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- 21] Bind them continually upon thine heart, *and* tie them about thy neck.
22] When thou goest, it shall lead thee; when thou sleepest, it shall keep thee; and *when* thou awakest, it shall talk with thee.
23] For the commandment *is* a lamp; and the law *is* light; and reproofs of instruction *are* the way of life:
24] To keep thee from the evil woman, from the flattery of the tongue of a strange woman.
25] Lust not after her beauty in thine heart; neither let her take thee with her eyelids.
26] For by means of a whorish woman *a man is brought* to a piece of bread: and the adulteress will hunt for the precious life.

Back to the great sin in our contemporary society—the sex sins; which can wreck the life of a young man more than anything else. No one can calculate the lives that have been absolutely wrecked and ruined because of them. Jesus said, “Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery: But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already *in his heart*” (Mt 5:27-28).

- 27] Can a man take fire in his bosom, and his clothes not be burned?
28] Can one go upon hot coals, and his feet not be burned?
29] So he that goeth in to his neighbour’s wife; whosoever toucheth her shall not be innocent.
30] *Men* do not despise a thief, if he steal to satisfy his soul when he is hungry;
31] But *if* he be found, he shall restore sevenfold; he shall give all the substance of his house.
32] *But* whoso committeth adultery with a woman lacketh understanding: he *that* doeth it destroyeth his own soul.
33] A wound and dishonour shall he get; and his reproach shall not be wiped away.
34] For jealousy *is* the rage of a man: therefore he will not spare in the day of vengeance.
35] He will not regard any ransom; neither will he rest content, though thou givest many gifts.

Sexual Sin Results in Losses

- **They lose the Word of God** **Prov 6:20-24**

If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth: But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin. If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

1 John 1:6-9

1 John 1:5-10 notes that “walking in the light” assures us of hearing the Word of God, while “walking in darkness” causes us to lose His Word.

There is a gradual erosion of the spiritual life, from light to darkness, and with this erosion comes a deterioration of Christian character.

- **They lose wealth** **Prov 6:25-26**

Scandal? a lawsuit? a divorce? AIDS? the price will not be cheap...

- **They lose enjoyment** **Prov 6:27-31**

Sex is a good gift from God but, like fire, if it gets out of control, it becomes destructive. What begins as a “warm” experience soon becomes a burning experience, like holding a torch in your lap or walking on burning coals.

- **They lose their good sense** **Prov 6:32**

King David was a brilliant strategist on the battlefield and a wise ruler on the throne, but he lost his common sense when he gazed at his neighbor’s wife and lusted for her (2 Sam 12). He was sure he could get away with his sin, but common sense would have told him he was wrong. Every stratagem David used to implicate Bathsheba’s husband failed, so he ended up having the man killed. Surely David knew that we reap what we sow, and reap he did, right in the harvest field of his own family.

[Cf. Ahithophel—advisor to Absalom in his rebellion, was Bathsheba’s unforgiving grandfather! He was the father of Eliam, the father of Bathsheba (2 Sam 11:3; 23:34,39). Uriah the Hittite and Eliam, being both of the king’s guard (consisting of 37 officers), were friends, and Uriah married the daughter of his brother officer. You can understand Ahithophel’s sense of wrong toward David, the murderer of his grandson by marriage and the corrupter of his granddaughter! The people’s loyalty was naturally shaken toward one whose moral character they had ceased to respect.]

- **They lose their peace** **Prov 6:33-35**

Sinners can be sure that their sins will find them out. Indulging in sexual sin is always a losing proposition.

Proverbs 7: The Lure of the Harlot

“Women are the measure of weakness in a man.”

- 1] My son, keep my words, and lay up my commandments with thee.
- 2] Keep my commandments, and live; and my law as the apple of thine eye.
- 3] Bind them upon thy fingers, write them upon the table of thine heart.

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- 4] Say unto wisdom, Thou *art* my sister; and call understanding *thy* kinswoman:

After an introduction for emphasis, he continues with the issue of sex sins.

- 5] That they may keep thee from the strange woman, from the stranger *which* flattereth with her words.
6] For at the window of my house I looked through my casement,
7] And beheld among the simple ones, I discerned among the youths, a young man void of understanding,
8] Passing through the street near her corner; and he went the way to her house,
9] In the twilight, in the evening, in the black and dark night:
10] And, behold, there met him a woman *with* the attire of an harlot, and subtil of heart.
11] (She *is* loud and stubborn; her feet abide not in her house:
12] Now *is she* without, now in the streets, and lieth in wait at every corner.)

If you want to avoid the devil, stay away from his neighborhood.

- 13] So she caught him, and kissed him, *and* with an impudent face said unto him,
14] *I have* peace offerings with me; this day have I payed my vows.

Notice that she is religious! She leads him to believe that she is right with God.

- 15] Therefore came I forth to meet thee, diligently to seek thy face, and I have found thee.

In other words, “I’ve been looking for you all my life, and at last I have found you!”

- 16] I have decked my bed with coverings of tapestry, with carved *works*, with fine linen of Egypt.
17] I have perfumed my bed with myrrh, aloes, and cinnamon.
18] Come, let us take our fill of love until the morning: let us solace ourselves with loves.
19] For the goodman *is* not at home, he is gone a long journey:
20] He hath taken a bag of money with him, *and* will come home at the day appointed.
21] With her much fair speech she caused him to yield, with the flattering of her lips she forced him.
22] He goeth after her straightway, as an ox goeth to the slaughter, or as a fool to the correction of the stocks;
23] Till a dart strike through his liver; as a bird hasteth to the snare, and knoweth not that it *is* for his life.
24] Harken unto me now therefore, O ye children, and attend to the words of my mouth.
25] Let not thine heart decline to her ways, go not astray in her paths.
26] For she hath cast down many wounded: yea, many strong *men* have been slain by her.
27] Her house *is* the way to hell, going down to the chambers of death.

The Path to Destruction

- **He tempts himself**

Prov 7:6-9

This young man is either terribly dumb or very proud, convinced that he can play with sin and get away with it. But he's only tempting himself and heading for trouble. To begin with, he's out at night ("walking in darkness"; see 2:13; John 3:19-21; 1 John 1:5-7), and he's deliberately walking near the place of temptation and danger.

- **He is tempted by the woman**

Prov 7:10-20

She would prepare him a feast that he would never forget. She assures him that nobody will find out about it (except that Somebody *is* watching...!)

- **He tempts the Lord**

Prov 7:21-27

We tempt God when we deliberately disobey Him and put ourselves into situations so difficult that only God can deliver us (Ex 17:1-7; Num 14:22; Deut 6:16; Ps 78:18, 56; 1 Cor 10:9). Society today not only smiles at sexual sin, it actually approves it and encourages it. Our entertainment industry celebrates it, promotes it, and exports it throughout the world.

Hebrew Hermeneutics

- *Peshat* – the literal, direct meaning.
- *Remez* – an allegorical significance; a hint of something deeper.
- *Derash* – the homiletical, or practical application.
- *Sod* – the mystical or hidden meaning.

This paradigm emerged before the 12th century, (Moses de Leon), and the rabbis use the mnemonic, *PaRDeS*, (The Garden, or Paradise), to remember them. The first three have their parallels in traditional Christian hermeneutics; (yet we would probably order them with *Remez* as third, and *Derash* as second, but that would spoil their mnemonic.)

Sod: Proverbs 5, 6, 7

- Solomon, the Collector of Dark Sentences.
- The Harlot = Babylon.
 - Nimrod, the Hunter of Men.
 - The Semiramis & Tammus Legends.
- *Christmas, Ishtar, et al.*

- Fornication = Spiritual unchastity.
- *There is nothing “new” in the New Age.*

Proverbs 8: Wisdom’s Chapter

In the volume of the book it is written of me.

Psalm 40:7

- 1] Doth not wisdom cry? and understanding put forth her voice?
- 2] She standeth in the top of high places, by the way in the places of the paths.
- 3] She crieth at the gates, at the entry of the city, at the coming in at the doors.
- 4] Unto you, O men, I call; and my voice *is* to the sons of man.
- 5] O ye simple, understand wisdom: and, ye fools, be ye of an understanding heart.

“Intellectual problems” evaporate once a favorite sin is repented of... Psalm 14:1: “The fool hath said in his heart, *There is* no God. They are corrupt, they have done abominable works, *there is* none that doeth good.”

*And not as Moses, which put a vail over his face, that the children of Israel could not stedfastly look to the end of that which is abolished: But their minds were blinded: for until this day remaineth the same vail untaken away in the reading of the old testament; which vail is done away in Christ. But even unto this day, when Moses is read, the vail is upon their **heart**. Nevertheless when **it** shall turn to the Lord, the vail shall be taken away.*

2 Corinthians 3:13-16

- 6] Hear; for I will speak of excellent things; and the opening of my lips *shall be* right things.
- 7] For my mouth shall speak truth; and wickedness *is* an abomination to my lips.
- 8] All the words of my mouth *are* in righteousness; *there is* nothing froward or perverse in them.
- 9] They *are* all plain to him that understandeth, and right to them that find knowledge.

There are no “problems” in the Bible; the problems are in our understanding, or in the lack thereof.

- 10] Receive my instruction, and not silver; and knowledge rather than choice gold.
- 11] For wisdom *is* better than rubies; and all the things that may be desired are not to be compared to it.
- 12] I wisdom dwell with prudence, and find out knowledge of witty inventions.
- 13] The fear of the LORD *is* to hate evil: pride, and arrogancy, and the evil way, and the froward mouth, do I hate.

“...froward mouth” = “the mouth of perversions do I hate.” Wisdom is manifest. It is the character of God, and that character has been revealed in Christ. Evil, pride, arrogance, and an evil way are hateful to Him. *If we belong to Him, we will hate these things also.*

Priorities

But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you?

Matthew 6:33

[This is “Wisdom”—the person—talking...Jesus Christ!] The Word of God is going to make it clear that **wisdom is a person**, the person of the Lord Jesus Christ.

- 14] Counsel *is* mine, and sound wisdom: I *am* understanding; I have strength.
- 15] By me kings reign, and princes decree justice.
- 16] By me princes rule, and nobles, *even* all the judges of the earth.

Psalms & Daniel it is repeated: “the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will.” [God overrules down here in the affairs of this world!]

- 17] I love them that love me; and those that seek me early shall find me.
- 18] Riches and honour *are* with me; *yea*, durable riches and righteousness.
- 19] My fruit *is* better than gold, yea, than fine gold; and my revenue than choice silver.

Solomon learned this early in his life. He discovered that when he sought God, God gave him wisdom. He had sought God early—as soon as he became king. He knew it was God who had given him a unique wisdom. And God is prepared to give us wisdom if we are willing to meet the conditions: a diligent study and love of the Word of God early in our Christian life.

- 20] I lead in the way of righteousness, in the midst of the paths of judgment:
- 21] That I may cause those that love me to inherit substance; and I will fill their treasures.
- 22] The LORD possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old.

Wisdom is personified in Christ!...

- 23] I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was.
- 24] When *there were* no depths, I was brought forth; when *there were* no fountains abounding with water.
- 25] Before the mountains were settled, before the hills was I brought forth:
- 26] While as yet he had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the highest part of the dust of the world.

“I was set up” = I was **anointed** from everlasting. “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God” (John 1:1,2). He was begotten, not in the

sense of having a beginning of life, but as being one nature and substance with the Father. Way back yonder in eternity He was God, and He was in the beginning with God. He was in the beginning that *has* no beginning, because “in the beginning *was* the Word.” He was already past tense at the time of the beginning.

- 27] When he prepared the heavens, I *was* there: when he set a compass upon the face of the depth:
- 28] When he established the clouds above: when he strengthened the fountains of the deep:
- 29] When he gave to the sea his decree, that the waters should not pass his commandment: when he appointed the foundations of the earth:

All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.

John 1:3

- 30] Then I was by him, *as* one brought up *with him*: and I was daily *his* delight, rejoicing always before him;
- 31] Rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth; and my delights *were* with the sons of men.
- 32] Now therefore hearken unto me, O ye children: for blessed *are they that* keep my ways.
- 33] Hear instruction, and be wise, and refuse it not.
- 34] Blessed *is* the man that heareth me, watching daily at my gates, waiting at the posts of my doors.
- 35] For whoso findeth me findeth life, and shall obtain favour of the LORD.
- 36] But he that sinneth against me wrongeth his own soul: all they that hate me love death.

Who is the embodiment of wisdom? Jesus Christ!

Proverbs 9

- 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,

The College of Wisdom (note: seven pillars, completeness): a complete education all the way through to the Ph.D. degree.

- 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.
- 7] He that reproveth a scorner getteth to himself shame: and he that rebuketh a wicked *man* *getteth* himself a blot.

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

There are those who will not hear. They are the scorners. There is no use wasting your time with them. In practically every church you will find a little group that will resist the Word of God. Are we to keep on giving the Word of God to them? No. The Lord Jesus said not to cast our pearls before swine.

Avoiding Truth (The Scorer's Creed):

There is a principle which is a bar against all information, which is proof against all argument, and which cannot fail to keep man in everlasting ignorance. That principle is condemnation before investigation.

—Attributed to Edmund Spencer

- 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.

The Key verse of the entire book! A man is, indeed, a fool to live without God in this world. [The question for the Atheist: “What is your back-up plan?”]

- 11] For by me thy days shall be multiplied, and the years of thy life shall be increased.
- 12] If thou be wise, thou shalt be wise for thyself: but *if* thou scornest, thou alone shalt bear *it*.

Summary

We cannot avoid decisions: “Decision determines destiny.” We choose either the path of Wisdom or the path of Folly; we cannot postpone this decision or avoid it. To choose one is to reject the other; to reject one is to choose the other. What decision have *you* made?

Risk Analysis: Pascal's Wager

Let us assess the two cases: if you win you win everything, if you lose you lose nothing.

Blaise Pascal, *Pensées*, 167

“Yes, but you must wager. There is no choice, you are already committed. Which will you choose then? Let us see: since a choice must be made, let us see which offers you the least interest. You have two things to lose:

the true and the good; and two things to stake: your **reason** and your will, your knowledge and your **happiness**; and your nature has two things to avoid: error and wretchedness.

“Since you must necessarily choose, your reason is no more affronted by choosing one rather than the other. That is one point cleared up. But your happiness? Let us weigh up the gain and the loss involved in calling heads that God exists. Let us assess the two cases: if you win you win everything, if you lose you lose nothing. Do not hesitate then; wager that he does exist.” [J. Neyman and E. S. Pearson, *Transactions of Royal Society of London*, A, 31, 1933, pp.289-337, is the classic reference.]

Risk Analysis

	Conclusion:	
	False	True
Actuality:	True	OK
	False	OK
	Type I Error	Type II Error

Type I Error: Rejecting a true hypothesis

Type II Error: Accepting a false hypothesis

J. Neyman and E. S. Pearson

Sin is always alluring: Folly does everything she can to make sin attractive. She never reveals her true nature; she never tells people that her house is the way to hell. The only way to detect Folly is to walk with Wisdom (Prov 2:10-22). Those who walk with Wisdom, obeying the Word of God, will not easily be tricked by Folly

- 14] A foolish woman is clamorous: she is simple, and knoweth nothing.
- 15] For she sitteth at the door of her house, on a seat in the high places of the city, To call passengers who go right on their ways:

It takes time for judgment to fall: The simple, the fool, and the scorner all thought they “had it made” when they rejected Wisdom, because

nothing disastrous immediately happened. But judgment eventually caught up with them. “Whatever a man sows, that he will also reap” (Gal 6:7).

The Fruits of Debauchery

*My days are in the yellow leaf; the flowers and fruits of love are gone;
The worm, the canker, and the grief are mine alone!*

Lord Byron

Byron had everything this world can offer—good looks, genius, fame, wealth, and yet he said, “the worm, the canker, and the grief are mine alone!” That is what the school of the foolish woman did for him.

Satan appeals to the flesh: The “wicked woman” (or “strange woman”) is appealing to the young man’s appetites. She tells him he can use his body as he pleases and not suffer for it. Sexual sin leads to tragic results, both in body and soul. In these days of flagrant immorality (in movies, TV, music, advertising, etc.), it is important that young and old people keep their hearts and minds pure.

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

God continues to call: So long as people will hear, God’s Spirit continues to call. But when sinners refuse to obey, their ears become deaf to the Word of God. Beware! “Today, if you will hear His voice, do not harden your hearts” (Heb 3:7ff).

An Addendum:

Which Judgment of God Results from the Denial of the Creation?

Romans Chapter 1

- 20] For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, *even* his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse:
- 21] Because that, when they knew God, they glorified *him* not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened.

- 22] Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools,

In studying the Bible, I was surprised to see the unusual emphasis on the importance of the *Creation* throughout the Bible...

- 23] And changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things.
24] Wherefore **God also gave them up** to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves:
25] Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen.
26] For this cause **God gave them up** unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature:
27] And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompence of their error which was meet.
28] And even as they did not like to retain God in *their* knowledge, **God gave them over** to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient;
29] Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers,
20] Backbiters, haters of God, spiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents...

Next Session

Review Chapters 1 – 9. Study Chapters 10 - 15.

The Book of Proverbs Session 3 Chapters 10 - 14

Outline of the Book of Proverbs

- | | |
|--|-------------------|
| • Wisdom and Folly Contrasted | Prov 1–9 |
| • Proverbs of Solomon
<i>(Written and set in order by himself)</i> | Prov 10–24 |
| • Proverbs of Solomon
<i>(Set in order by men of Hezekiah)</i> | Prov 25–29 |
| • Oracle of Agur | Prov 30 |
| • Proverbs of Lemuel's Mother | Prov 31 |

Summary of Proverbs (So Far)

- *We cannot avoid decisions.*
- *Sin is always alluring.*

- *It takes time for judgment to fall.*
- *Satan appeals to the flesh.*
- *God continues to call.*

Caveats

- Experience not mere theological dogma.
- If some of Proverbs' assertions work out less in our world, that may reflect the wickedness of our world.
- Generalizations: there are exceptions, but the general statements and the exceptions both need to be taken into account.
- Other parts of Scripture solve the problem of the apparent injustice of life in this age by seeing justice worked out in the age to come. Theologically, it must in the end be the case that the universe works out in a just way.

Personal Proverbs Log

- Month #1: AM—Read the chapter for that date (1-31). PM—Record the verse that proved to be the most relevant for that day.
- Month #2: Repeat Month #1.
- Personal Discovery: The most relevant may have been tailored to *your* specific day!

Proverbs 10

- 1] The proverbs of Solomon. A wise son maketh a glad father: but a foolish son *is* the heaviness of his mother.
- 2] Treasures of wickedness profit nothing: but righteousness delivereth from death.
- 3] The LORD will not suffer the soul of the righteous to famish: but he casteth away the substance of the wicked.
- 4] He becometh poor that dealeth *with* a slack hand: but the hand of the diligent maketh rich.

Industry is not only commended, it is commanded. In the Bible: faith and laziness will not mingle. Think of Joseph: he was sold into Egypt and must have felt that he had come to the end and that God seemed far away. Yet he had faith in God. God did not forsake him. God arranged it that eventually he was brought out of prison and was made the prime minister of the entire land of Egypt.

- 5] He that gathereth in summer *is* a wise son: *but* he that sleepeth in harvest *is* a son that causeth shame.
- 6] Blessings *are* upon the head of the just: but violence covereth the mouth of the wicked.

THE BOOK OF PROVERBS

A better translation of v.6: “The mouth of the wicked covereth (or concealeth) violence (or mischievous devices)” to be executed in due time (Ps 5:9; 10:7; Rom 3:14), and hence has no praises (cf. v. 11).

“Blessings are upon the head of the just” reminds me of Samuel. “But violence covereth the mouth of the wicked (lawless)” reminds me of Saul.

- 7] The memory of the just *is* blessed: but the name of the wicked shall rot.

“Rot” = literally, “be worm-eaten,” useless and disgusting.

- 8] The wise in heart will receive commandments: but a prating fool shall fall.

“Prating fool—or, “fool of lips of wicked language.”

- 9] He that walketh uprightly walketh surely: but he that perverteth his ways shall be known.
10] He that winketh with the eye causeth sorrow: but a prating fool shall fall.
11] The mouth of a righteous *man* *is* a well of life: but violence covereth the mouth of the wicked.
12] Hatred stirreth up strifes: but love covereth all sins.

“Winks with the eye” is to spread gossip or to attack by innuendo. The pain caused by vindictive or disparaging remarks stands in contrast to the positive impact of words spoken by the righteous, which are “a fountain of life” (v. 11). See also vv. 21, “The lips of the righteous nourish many.”

- 13] In the lips of him that hath understanding wisdom is found: but a rod *is* for the back of him that is void of understanding.
14] Wise *men* lay up knowledge: but the mouth of the foolish *is* near destruction.
15] The rich man’s wealth *is* his strong city: the destruction of the poor *is* their poverty.
16] The labour of the righteous *tendeth* to life: the fruit of the wicked to sin.

Both by trusting in “uncertain riches” (1Tim 6:17), or by the evils of poverty (Prov 30:9), men, not fearing God, fall into dangers.

- 17] He *is in* the way of life that keepeth instruction: but he that refuseth reproof erreth.
18] He that hideth hatred *with* lying lips, and he that uttereth a slander, *is* a fool.
19] In the multitude of words there wanteth not sin: but he that refraineth his lips *is* wise.
20] The tongue of the just *is as* choice silver: the heart of the wicked *is* little worth.

Cf. Lev 19:16, 17: “Thou shalt not go up and down as a talebearer among thy people ... Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thine heart: thou shalt in any wise rebuke thy neighbour, and not suffer sin upon him.”

The Most Painful Sin

What sin has probably caused more pain than any other?

Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour.

Exodus 20:16

In its formal form, a violation of a commandment written in stone by the finger of God! In its informal forms, a form of betrayal...

Gossip

- Gossip is a form of betrayal!
- Gossip is probably accountable for more personal pain and suffering than most of us have any appreciation of.
- Common, casual, yet hurtful beyond our imagining.
- Quietly, behind the flurry of daily priorities, its venom does its silent work, undermining confidences, betraying relationships, spreading unseen injustices...
- It is disturbing to note how many of us have been injured—deeply—by gossip and by those who accept, without checking, negative or derogatory innuendos whispered behind our backs.
- What an opportunity! To display loyalty, love, and, by assuming the most charitable construction, *in advance*, demonstrate the foundation of a relationship!

The tongue is a ready and willing instrument to talk about our neighbor behind his back (Rom 1:30; 2 Cor 12:20; James 4:11).

For I fear, lest, when I come, I shall not find you such as I would, and that I shall be found unto you such as ye would not: lest there be debates, envyings, wraths, strifes, backbitings, whisperings, swellings, tumults:

2 Corinthians 12:20

Thou shalt not go up and down as a talebearer among thy people:

Leviticus 19:16

A talebearer revealeth secrets: but he that is of a faithful spirit concealeth the matter.

Proverbs 11:13

The words of a talebearer are as wounds, and they go down into the innermost parts of the belly.

Proverbs 18:8

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He that goeth about as a talebearer revealeth secrets: therefore meddle not with him that flattereth with his lips.

Proverbs 20.19

Where no wood is, there the fire goeth out: so where there is no talebearer, the strife ceaseth. As coals are to burning coals, and wood to fire; so is a contentious man to kindle strife. The words of a talebearer are as wounds, and they go down into the innermost parts of the belly.

Proverbs 26:20-22

The “Christian” Approach? “I don’t want to gossip. However, in order that you might pray more specifically for _____, let me tell you the latest...”

This they said, tempting him, that they might have to accuse him. But Jesus stooped down, and with his finger wrote on the ground, as though he heard them not. So when they continued asking him, he lifted up himself, and said unto them, He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her.

John 8:6,7

What Is a True Friend? One who doesn’t require explanations. One who gives the benefit of the doubt. One who is loyal and shuns any form of betrayal...

“I Hear It Said...”

—by Barbara Young

Last night my friend—he says he is my friend—
Came in and questioned me.

“I hear it said you have done this and that.

I come to ask are these things true?”

A glint was in his eye of small distrust.

His words were crisp and hot.

He measured me with anger,

and flung down a little heap of facts had come to him.

“I hear it said you have done this and that.”

Suppose I have? And are you not my friend?

And are you not my friend enough to say,

“If it were true, there would be reason in it.

And if I cannot know the how and why,

Still I can trust you, waiting for a word,

Or for no word, if no word ever come!”

Is friendship just a thing of afternoons,

Of pleasuring one’s friend and one’s dear self—

Greed for sedate approval of his pace,
Suspicion if he take one little turn
Upon the road, one flight into the air,
And has not sought you for your Yea or Nay!

No. Friendship is not so. I am my own.
And howsoever near my friend may draw
Unto my soul, there is a legend hung
Above a certain straight and narrow way
Says "Dear my friend, ye may not enter here!"

I would the time has come—as it has not—
When men shall rise and say, "He is my friend.
He has done this? And what is that to me!
Think you I have a check upon his head,
Or cast a guiding rein across his neck?
I am his friend. And for that cause I walk
Not overclose beside him, leaving still
Space for his silences, and space for mine."

- 21] The lips of the righteous feed many: but fools die for want of wisdom.
22] The blessing of the LORD, it maketh rich, and he addeth no sorrow with it.

God's blessing on the righteous man brings trouble-free wealth. When riches come bound up in the same bundle with worries and fear, they can never satisfy.

- 23] *It is* as sport to a fool to do mischief: but a man of understanding hath wisdom.
24] The fear of the wicked, it shall come upon him: but the desire of the righteous shall be granted.

What we enjoy as well as what we dislike is a measure of our character.

- 25] As the whirlwind passeth, so *is* the wicked no *more*: but the righteous *is* an everlasting foundation.
26] As vinegar to the teeth, and as smoke to the eyes, so *is* the sluggard to them that send him.

Vinegar and smoke are irritations. So is a person who dawdles.

- 27] The fear of the LORD prolongeth days: but the years of the wicked shall be shortened.
28] The hope of the righteous *shall be* gladness: but the expectation of the wicked shall perish.
29] The way of the LORD *is* strength to the upright: but destruction *shall be* to the workers of iniquity.

- 30] The righteous shall never be removed; but the wicked shall not inhabit the earth.
- 31] The mouth of the just bringeth forth wisdom: but the froward tongue shall be cut out.
- 32] The lips of the righteous know what is acceptable: but the mouth of the wicked *speakeeth* frowardness.

The proverb links speech and consequence.

Proverbs 11

- 1] A false balance *is* abomination to the LORD: but a just weight *is* his delight.
Leviticus 19:35-36 forbids the use of “dishonest standards;” We can’t be too careful trying to be fair with others.
- 2] *When* pride cometh, then cometh shame: but with the lowly *is* wisdom.
- 3] The integrity of the upright shall guide them: but the perverseness of transgressors shall destroy them.

If you mean business with God, He will open the proper door.

- 4] Riches profit not in the day of wrath: but righteousness delivereth from death.

The rich man and Lazarus (Luke 16)...

- 5] The righteousness of the perfect shall direct his way: but the wicked shall fall by his own wickedness.

Translate “wicked” as *lawless*...

- 6] The righteousness of the upright shall deliver them: but transgressors shall be taken in *their own* naughtiness.
- 7] When a wicked man dieth, *his* expectation shall perish: and the hope of unjust *men* perisheth.
- 8] The righteous is delivered out of trouble, and the wicked cometh in his stead.

A good example is Haman in the Book of Esther...

- 9] An hypocrite with *his* mouth destroyeth his neighbour: but through knowledge shall the just be delivered.
- 10] When it goeth well with the righteous, the city rejoiceth: and when the wicked perish, *there is* shouting.
- 11] By the blessing of the upright the city is exalted: but it is overthrown by the mouth of the wicked.

Why should the community rejoice in the prosperity of the righteous?
Because both the way a righteous man gains his wealth and the way he

uses it benefits society. The righteous businessman employs others, supports schools and government with his taxes and, in the O.T. tradition, shares generously.

- 12] He that is void of wisdom despiseth his neighbour: but a man of understanding holdeth his peace.
- 13] A talebearer revealeth secrets: but he that is of a faithful spirit concealeth the matter.
- 14] Where no counsel *is*, the people fall: but in the multitude of counsellors *there is* safety.
- 15] He that is surety for a stranger shall smart *for it*: and he that hateth suretiship is sure.

A joint venture: one with money and one with experience. Shortly, they change places.

- 16] A gracious woman retaineth honour: and strong *men* retain riches.
- 17] The merciful man doeth good to his own soul: but *he that is* cruel troubleth his own flesh.
- 18] The wicked worketh a deceitful work: but to him that soweth righteousness *shall be* a sure reward.
- 19] As righteousness *tendeth* to life: so he that pursueth evil *pursueth it* to his own death.
- 20] They that are of a froward heart *are* abomination to the LORD: but *such as are* upright in *their way are* his delight.
- 21] *Though* hand *join* in hand, the wicked shall not be unpunished: but the seed of the righteous shall be delivered.
- 22] *As* a jewel of gold in a swine's snout, *so is* a fair woman which is without discretion.

A gem of a proverb. Also a good summary of Hollywood...

- 23] The desire of the righteous *is* only good: *but* the expectation of the wicked *is* wrath.
- 24] There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth; and *there is* that withholdeth more than is meet, but *it tendeth* to poverty.
- 25] The liberal soul shall be made fat: and he that watereth shall be watered also himself.
- 26] He that withholdeth corn, the people shall curse him: but blessing *shall be* upon the head of him that selleth *it*.

Contrast Nabal (1 Sam 25) with Joseph (Gen 37-50).

- 27] He that diligently seeketh good procureth favour: but he that seeketh mischief, it shall come unto him.

“Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap” (Gal 6:7).

- 28] He that trusteth in his riches shall fall: but the righteous shall flourish as a branch.

“You can’t take it with you:” you must send it on ahead!

- 29] He that troubleth his own house shall inherit the wind: and the fool *shall be* servant to the wise of heart.
- 30] The fruit of the righteous *is* a tree of life; and he that winneth souls *is* wise.
- 31] Behold, the righteous shall be recompensed in the earth: much more the wicked and the sinner.

The inescapable appointment: Judgment Day *will* come. The ultimate Day of Reckoning.

Proverbs 12

- 1] Whoso loveth instruction loveth knowledge: but he that hateth reproof *is* brutish.

The Hebrew calls the man who hates correction “brutish:” animals controlled by instinct are unable to learn from criticism. The person who gets angry when corrected rather than taking the criticism to heart has as little chance to make moral progress as a dumb animal.

- 2] A good *man* obtaineth favour of the LORD: but a man of wicked devices will he condemn.
- 3] A man shall not be established by wickedness: but the root of the righteous shall not be moved.
- 4] A virtuous woman *is* a crown to her husband: but she that maketh ashamed *is* as rottenness in his bones.
- 5] The thoughts of the righteous *are* right: *but* the counsels of the wicked *are* deceit.
- 6] The words of the wicked *are* to lie in wait for blood: but the mouth of the upright shall deliver them.
- 7] The wicked are overthrown, and *are* not: but the house of the righteous shall stand.
- 8] A man shall be commended according to his wisdom: but he that is of a perverse heart shall be despised.
- 9] *He that is* despised, and hath a servant, *is* better than he that honoureth himself, and lacketh bread.
- 10] A righteous *man* regardeth the life of his beast: but the tender mercies of the wicked *are* cruel.

Being kind to animals is Scriptural.

- 11] He that tilleth his land shall be satisfied with bread: but he that followeth vain *persons is* void of understanding.
- 12] The wicked desireth the net of evil *men*: but the root of the righteous yieldeth *fruit*.
- 13] The wicked is snared by the transgression of *his* lips: but the just shall come out of trouble.
- 14] A man shall be satisfied with good by the fruit of *his* mouth: and the recompence of a man’s hands shall be rendered unto him.

- 15] The way of a fool *is* right in his own eyes: but he that hearkeneth unto counsel *is* wise.
- 16] A fool's wrath is presently known: but a prudent *man* covereth shame.
- 17] *He that* speaketh truth sheweth forth righteousness: but a false witness deceit.
- 18] There is that speaketh like the piercings of a sword: but the tongue of the wise *is* health.
- 19] The lip of truth shall be established for ever: but a lying tongue *is* but for a moment.
- 20] Deceit *is* in the heart of them that imagine evil: but to the counsellors of peace *is* joy.

The Word of God has more to say about the abuse of the tongue, than it is has to say about the use and abuse of alcohol.

- 21] There shall no evil happen to the just: but the wicked shall be filled with mischief.
- 22] Lying lips *are* abomination to the LORD: but they that deal truly *are* his delight.
- 23] A prudent man concealeth knowledge: but the heart of fools proclaimeth foolishness.
- 24] The hand of the diligent shall bear rule: but the slothful shall be under tribute.

One of the tragedies of our society is that we have disconnected destiny from character. However, the Proverbs take an eternal perspective...

- 25] Heaviness in the heart of man maketh it stoop: but a good word maketh it glad.
- 26] The righteous *is* more excellent than his neighbour: but the way of the wicked seduceth them.

Translate it this way: "The righteous searcheth out his neighbor." The righteous man wants to help his neighbor, while the wicked man will try to hurt his neighbor. The righteous man will come to talk to a neighbor and face him if he finds he is wrong.

- 27] The slothful *man* roasteth not that which he took in hunting: but the substance of a diligent man *is* precious.
- 28] In the way of righteousness *is* life; and *in* the pathway *thereof* *there is* no death.

Proverbs 13

- 1] A wise son *heareth* his father's instruction: but a scorner heareth not rebuke.
- 2] A man shall eat good by the fruit of *his* mouth: but the soul of the transgressors *shall eat* violence.
- 3] He that keepeth his mouth keepeth his life: *but* he that openeth wide his lips shall have destruction.
- 4] The soul of the sluggard desireth, and *hath* nothing: but the soul of the diligent shall be made fat.

Work, not welfare...

- 5] A righteous *man* hateth lying: but a wicked *man* is loathsome, and cometh to shame.

THE BOOK OF PROVERBS

- 6] Righteousness keepeth *him that is* upright in the way: but wickedness overthroweth the sinner.
7] There is that maketh himself rich, yet *hath* nothing: *there is* that maketh himself poor, yet *hath* great riches.

False fronts in both directions: be what you are; avoid phoniness...

- 8] The ransom of a man's life *are* his riches: but the poor heareth not rebuke.

Being poor is a preventative from kidnapping.

- 9] The light of the righteous rejoiceth: but the lamp of the wicked shall be put out.
10] Only by pride cometh contention: but with the well advised *is* wisdom.

Wow: here is an insight! it takes two to make a quarrel—*always*.

- 11] Wealth *gotten* by vanity shall be diminished: but he that gathereth by labour shall increase.

This is the source of “spendthrift trusts” and “generation-skipping” trusts... The track record of second generations is generally dismal...

- 12] Hope deferred maketh the heart sick: but *when* the desire cometh, *it is* a tree of life.
13] Whoso despiseth the word shall be destroyed: but he that feareth the commandment shall be rewarded.
14] The law of the wise *is* a fountain of life, to depart from the snares of death.
15] Good understanding giveth favour: but the way of transgressors *is* hard.
16] Every prudent *man* dealeth with knowledge: but a fool layeth open *his* folly.
17] A wicked messenger falleth into mischief: but a faithful ambassador *is* health.

A common practice in politics: control by compromising information...

- 18] Poverty and shame *shall be to* him that refuseth instruction: but he that regardeth reproof shall be honoured.

Great leaders were great listeners!

- 19] The desire accomplished is sweet to the soul: but *it is* abomination to fools to depart from evil.
20] He that walketh with wise *men* shall be wise: but a companion of fools shall be destroyed.
21] Evil pursueth sinners: but to the righteous good shall be repayed.
22] A good *man* leaveth an inheritance to his children's children: and the wealth of the sinner *is* laid up for the just.
23] Much food *is in* the tillage of the poor: but there *is that is* destroyed for want of judgment.
24] He that spareth his rod hateth his son: but he that loveth him chasteneth him betimes.

A parent who fails to discipline his or her children is not showing love. The verb translated here as “hate” is used in a comparative sense. If you really love your children, you don’t overlook their faults, but take steps to correct them. But the father is told, “... provoke not your children to wrath...” (Eph 6:1, 4). That is, don’t whip them or discipline them when you are angry or talking in a loud voice.

- 25] The righteous eateth to the satisfying of his soul: but the belly of the wicked shall want.

Proverbs 14

- 1] Every wise woman buildeth her house: but the foolish plucketh it down with her hands.

Sarah and Jochebed are good examples. Contrariwise, the counsel of Ahaziah’s mother, Athaliah, really brought the house of Ahab low (2 Chr 22:2-3).

- 2] He that walketh in his uprightness feareth the LORD: but *he that is* perverse in his ways despiseth him.
3] In the mouth of the foolish *is* a rod of pride: but the lips of the wise shall preserve them.
4] Where no oxen *are*, the crib *is* clean: but much increase *is* by the strength of the ox.

This one is posted on the door of my study (which is piled with notes and unfinished projects...)

- 5] A faithful witness will not lie: but a false witness will utter lies.
6] A scorner seeketh wisdom, and *findeth it* not: but knowledge *is* easy unto him that understandeth.
7] Go from the presence of a foolish man, when thou perceivest not *in him* the lips of knowledge.
8] The wisdom of the prudent *is* to understand his way: but the folly of fools *is* deceit.
9] Fools make a mock at sin: but among the righteous *there is* favour.

Jezebel is a classic example. So is Hollywood and the entertainment industry which celebrates everything God abhors...

- 10] The heart knoweth his own bitterness; and a stranger doth not intermeddle with his joy.

We all have things that are difficult to really share...

- 11] The house of the wicked shall be overthrown: but the tabernacle of the upright shall flourish.

THE BOOK OF PROVERBS

- 12] There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof *are* the ways of death.

This explains the cults; they appeal to the flesh. But the end in spiritual death. John 14:6. Remember, Christ prayed three times in Gethsemane: if there is *any* other way, His prayers were not answered!

- 13] Even in laughter the heart is sorrowful; and the end of that mirth *is* heaviness.
14] The backslider in heart shall be filled with his own ways: and a good man *shall be satisfied* from himself.

The Hebrew reads “from upon him a good man” is rewarded. The thought is that we can find a deep satisfaction in doing good, irrespective of material benefits.

- 15] The simple believeth every word: but the prudent *man* looketh well to his going.

Faith is not a leap in the dark: it is trusting God. Acts 17:11 *is* your guide.

- 16] A wise *man* feareth, and departeth from evil: but the fool rageth, and is confident.
17] *He that is* soon angry dealeth foolishly: and a man of wicked devices is hated.
18] The simple inherit folly: but the prudent are crowned with knowledge.
19] The evil bow before the good; and the wicked at the gates of the righteous.
20] The poor is hated even of his own neighbour: but the rich *hath* many friends.
21] He that despiseth his neighbour sinneth: but he that hath mercy on the poor, happy *is* he.
22] Do they not err that devise evil? but mercy and truth *shall be* to them that devise good.
23] In all labour there is profit: but the talk of the lips *tendeth* only to penury.
24] The crown of the wise *is* their riches: *but* the foolishness of fools *is* folly.
25] A true witness delivereth souls: but a deceitful *witness* speaketh lies.

Jesus: “if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch” (Mt 15:14).

- 26] In the fear of the LORD *is* strong confidence: and his children shall have a place of refuge.
27] The fear of the LORD *is* a fountain of life, to depart from the snares of death.
28] In the multitude of people *is* the king’s honour: but in the want of people *is* the destruction of the prince.
29] *He that is* slow to wrath *is* of great understanding: but *he that is* hasty of spirit exalteth folly.
30] A sound heart *is* the life of the flesh: but envy the rottenness of the bones.

Envy will not only rob you of your joy and fellowship with the Lord, but it will affect you physically.

- 31] He that oppresseth the poor reproacheth his Maker: but he that honoureth him hath mercy on the poor.

- 32] The wicked is driven away in his wickedness: but the righteous hath hope in his death.
- 33] Wisdom resteth in the heart of him that hath understanding: but *that which is* in the midst of fools is made known.
- 34] Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin *is* a reproach to any people.

This verse should be inscribed over the United Nations instead of the verse about beating their swords into plowshares, which will not happen until Christ reigns on this earth.

- 35] The king's favour *is* toward a wise servant: but his wrath is *against* him that causeth shame.

Next Session

Read Chapters 15 - 20. Identify examples from the lives in the Bible.

The Book of Proverbs Session 4

Chapters 15 - 19

Outline of the Book of Proverbs

- | | |
|--|-------------------|
| • Wisdom and Folly Contrasted | Prov 1–9 |
| • Proverbs of Solomon
(<i>Written and set in order by himself</i>) | Prov 10–24 |
| • Proverbs of Solomon
(<i>Set in order by men of Hezekiah</i>) | Prov 25–29 |
| • Oracle of Agur | Prov 30 |
| • Proverbs of Lemuel's Mother | Prov 31 |

What is your most Dangerous Weapon? Your Tongue!

The Godly Tongue

- When used for good, the tongue is like:
 - valuable silver (Prov 10:20).
 - a beautiful and fruitful tree of life (Prov 15:4; Cf. 12:14; 18:20).
 - a refreshing well of water (Prov 18:4; 10:11).
 - a healthy dose of medicine (Prov 12:18; Cf. James 3).

This demands a godly heart, because the tongue only speaks what the heart treasures. The tongue should be used for right purposes:

- bringing peace (Prov 15:1,2).
- giving wise reproof to the erring (Prov 25:12; 28:23).

- delivering lost souls from death (Prov 11:9; 14:3-5, 25; 12:6).
- teaching people the things of the Lord (Prov 15:7; 16:21, 23; 20:15).
- carrying the good news of the Gospel (Prov 25:25).

The Tongue

- | | |
|--------------------|--------------------|
| • Talebearing | Prov 18:8 |
| • Lying | Prov 12:17-22 |
| • Talking Too Much | Prov 12:13; 18:6-7 |
| • Talking Too Soon | Prov 18:13, 17 |
| • Flattering | Prov 26:28 |
| • Quarreling | Prov 12:16, 18 |

More damage is done to lives, homes, and churches by the tongue than by any other means. The tongue can be used to damage reputations and cause trouble, when it ought to be used to praise God, pray, and witness to others about Christ. The tongue is a “little member” of the body (James 3:5), but it is one member that must be yielded to God as a tool of righteousness (Rom 6:12-13).

Talebearing: Proverbs 18:8

- Moses warned about this sin (Lev. 19:16 ; Cf. 11:13).
- “Love covers all sins” (Prov 10:12; Cf. 17:9 1 Pet 4:8; James 5:20).
 - Management by hearsay? (Mt 18:15-18).
- Stay away from the talebearer (Prov 20:19).
 - a kindler of fires (Prov 26:20).
 - a destroyer of friendships (Prov 17:9).

A “talebearer” is one who runs from person to person telling matters that ought to be concealed, whether they are true or false.

- Words can be as deadly as weapons: Solomon compares deceitful words to three different weapons (Prov 25:18).
 - A maul (battle-ax) that crushes at close range.
 - A sword that cuts.
 - An arrow that pierces and can be shot from a distance.

Lying : Proverbs 12:17-22

- God hates a lying tongue (Prov 6:16-17).
- A lying tongue is only covering up sin in the heart (Prov 10:18).
 - It is deceit in the heart that makes a statement a lie (Prov 12:20).
 - The Bible tests and reveals the intents of the heart (Heb 4:12).

- Lies are like cutting swords, but the truth is like a healing medicine (Prov 12:18)
- The truth is eternal, but lies will be revealed and the liars judged (Prov 12:19; Cf. Ps. 52:4,5). Examples: Ananias and Sapphira (Acts 5) and Judas (John 12:1-8).
- The truth will deliver souls, but lies only lead to bondage and shame (Prov 14:25).
- Liars enjoy listening to liars (Prov 17:4).
 - The heart controls the ear as well as the lips.
- But all liars will be punished (Prov 19:5,9) and when they “eat their own words,” it will be like gravel (Prov 20:17).
- Hell is waiting for the one who “loves and practices a lie” (Rev 22:15).

Talking Too Much: Proverbs 12:13; 18:6-7

- The fool talks too much and talks his way right into trouble: His mouth becomes a trap, and he himself is snared by it (Prov 6:1-5).
 - “In the multitude of words sin is not lacking” (Prov 10:19).
 - A loose tongue = poverty and foolishness (Prov 14:23); many people would rather talk than work (Prov 15:2).
 - A controlled tongue means a safe life (Prov 13:3).
 - The person of few words is regarded as a person of knowledge (Prov 17:27,28).

Unfortunately, there is sometimes a “multitude of words” even in God’s house, and Ecc 5:1-7 has some good counsel about this.

Talking Too Soon: Proverbs 18:13, 17

- “Let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak” (James 1:19).
- “Restrain the lips” until you really have something to say (Prov 10:19).
- A godly person will study to answer, but a fool will open his mouth and pour out foolishness (Prov 15:28).
- Pray: “Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth; keep the door of my lips” (Ps 141:3; Cf. Ps 39:1).

Too often we are slow to hear—we never really listen to the whole matter patiently—and swift to speak; and this gets us into trouble.

- God wants us to search out each matter carefully and then give fair judgment (Prov 25:2). We are not to agree with the “first cause” that we hear but to seek to understand both sides of a matter (Prov 18:17).

- Potiphar did not listen to Joseph's side of the story and committed a great crime because of it (Gen 39:19).
- David jumped to conclusions about innocent Mephibosheth (2 Sam 16:1-4; 19:24-30).

Even where dedicated Christians are involved, there are two sides to a story. This is not because people necessarily lie, but simply because no two people see and hear the same matter in the same way.

Flattery: Proverbs 26:28

- Flattery is insincere praise given by one who has selfish motives.
 - Flattery is a dangerous net spread before an innocent man's feet (Prov 29:5).
 - "A flattering mouth works ruin" (Prov 26:28).
 - The flatterer's mouth is an open sepulchre (Ps 5:9).
- We are warned not to meddle with people given to flattery (Prov 20:19).

Flattery a form of lying, but it is so dangerous that it deserves separate attention.

- Satan used a form of flattery to tempt Eve: "You will be like God" (Gen 3:5).
- The evil woman uses flattery to tempt the young man (Prov 5:3; 7:5,21).
- "The rich has many friends" mainly because they want to flatter him and get something out of him (Prov 14:20; 19:4,6).
- Honest rebuke is better than flattery (Prov 28:23). "Faithful are the wounds of a friend, but the kisses of an enemy (like Judas) are deceitful" (Prov 27:6).
- Honest praise in the Christian life (1 Thess 5:12,13) is like a refiner's furnace (Prov 27:21); some Christians are so carnal they cannot take praise; it goes to their heads; or, it can reveal envy: they cannot stand to see another praised.

It brings to the top either the pure gold or the dross. When the Jews praised David for his victories, it made David humble, but it revealed the envy in Saul's heart (1 Sam 18).

Quarreling: Proverbs 12:16, 18

- Anger:
 - There is a righteous anger (Eph 4:26).

- Unrighteous anger, displays of temper (Prov 29:22).
- An angry person keeps adding fuel to the fire (Prov 26:21).
- The best way to stop an argument is with soft words (Prov 15:1-2).
 - This is the best way to “break the bones” (Prov 25:15).
- Being able to control one’s temper is the same as ruling an army or an empire (Prov 16:32; Cf. 14:17, 29; 17:14).

[Wiersbe, W. W. 1993. *Wiersbe’s expository outlines on the Old Testament* Victor Books: Wheaton, IL.]

Right Use of Words

- Words that help and encourage:
 - Prov 10:11, 20, 21; 12:14, 18; 15:4; 18:4, 20, 21.
- Words that express wisdom:
 - Prov 10:13, 31; 14:3; 15:2, 7; 16:10, 21, 23; 20:15.
- Words that are few:
 - Prov 10:19, 11:12, 13:3, 17:27.
- Words that are fitting (kind, pleasant, appropriate):
 - Prov 10:32; 12:25; 15:1, 4, 23; 16:24; 25:11, 15.
- Words that are true:
 - Prov 12:17, 19, 22; 14:5, 25.
- Words that are carefully chosen:
 - Prov 13:3, 15:28; 16:23; 21:23.

Wrong Use of Words

- Lying:
 - Prov 6:16, 17; 10:18; 12:19, 22; 17:4, 7; 19:5, 22; 21:6; 26:28.
- Slandering:
 - Prov 10:18; 30:10.
- Gossiping:
 - Prov 11:13; 16:28; 17:9; 18:8; 20:19; 26:20, 22.
- Constant Talking:
 - Prov 10:8, 10, 19; 17:28; 18:2; 10:19.
- False Witnessing:
 - Prov 12:17; 14:5, 35; 19:5, 28; 21:28; 25:18.
- Mocking:
 - Prov 12:1; 14:6; 15:12; 17:5; 19:29; 21:11; 22:10; 24:9; 30:17.
- Harsh Talking (perverse, evil, sly words):
 - Prov 10:31, 32; 12:18; 13:3; 14:3; 15:1, 28; 17:4; 19:1, 28.
- Boasting:
 - Prov 17:17; 20:14; 25:14; 27:1, 2.

- Quarreling:
– Prov 13:10; 15:18; 17:14,19; 19:13; 20:3; 21:9, 19; 22:10; 25:24; 19:17, 20, 21; 27:15.
- Deceiving:
– Prov 7:19, 20; 12:2; 15:4; 25:23.
- Flattering:
– Prov 26:28; 28:23; 29:5.
- Ignorant or Foolish Words:
– Prov 14:7; 15:2, 7-14; 18:6, 7.

Proverbs 15

- 1] A soft answer turneth away wrath: but grievous words stir up anger.

Cf. Nabal and Abigail (“Beauty and the Beast”).

- 2] The tongue of the wise useth knowledge aright: but the mouth of fools poureth out foolishness.
- 3] The eyes of the LORD *are* in every place, beholding the evil and the good.
- 4] A wholesome tongue *is* a tree of life: but perverseness therein *is* a breach in the spirit.
- 5] A fool despiseth his father’s instruction: but he that regardeth reproof is prudent.

The treasure that is in the house of the righteous consists of things like joy, peace, love, sympathy, comfort—wonderful treasures. They are the great treasures of life. The contrast is with the revenues of the wicked which are trouble.

- 6] In the house of the righteous *is* much treasure: but in the revenues of the wicked is trouble.
- 7] The lips of the wise disperse knowledge: but the heart of the foolish *doeth* not so.
- 8] The sacrifice of the wicked *is* an abomination to the LORD: but the prayer of the upright *is* his delight.

Salvation is 100% the Lord; our works are worthless—and can be blasphemous. Cf. v.26.

- 9] The way of the wicked *is* an abomination unto the LORD: but he loveth him that followeth after righteousness.

It is Christ who has been made unto us righteousness (1 Cor 1:30).

- 10] Correction *is* grievous unto him that forsaketh the way: *and* he that hateth reproof shall die.

“The Way”: Acts 24:14.

- 11] Hell and destruction *are* before the LORD: how much more then the hearts of the children of men?

“For the word of God *is* quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and *is* a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do” (Heb 4:12,13).

- 12] A scorner loveth not one that reproveth him: neither will he go unto the wise.
13] A merry heart maketh a cheerful countenance: but by sorrow of the heart the spirit is broken.
14] The heart of him that hath understanding seeketh knowledge: but the mouth of fools feedeth on foolishness.
15] All the days of the afflicted *are* evil: but he that is of a merry heart *hath* a continual feast.
16] Better *is* little with the fear of the LORD than great treasure and trouble therewith.
17] Better *is* a dinner of herbs where love is, than a stalled ox and hatred therewith.

Cf. Daniel 1.

- 18] A wrathful man stirreth up strife: but *he that is* slow to anger appeaseth strife.
19] The way of the slothful *man is* as an hedge of thorns: but the way of the righteous *is* made plain.
20] A wise son maketh a glad father: but a foolish man despiseth his mother.
21] Folly *is* joy to *him that is* destitute of wisdom: but a man of understanding walketh uprightly.
22] Without counsel purposes are disappointed: but in the multitude of counsellors they are established.
23] A man hath joy by the answer of his mouth: and a word *spoken* in due season, how good *is it!*
24] The way of life *is* above to the wise, that he may depart from hell beneath.
25] The LORD will destroy the house of the proud: but he will establish the border of the widow.
26] The thoughts of the wicked *are* an abomination to the LORD: but *the words* of the pure *are* pleasant words.
27] He that is greedy of gain troubleth his own house; but he that hateth gifts shall live.
28] The heart of the righteous studieth to answer: but the mouth of the wicked poureth out evil things.

Cf. v.8.

- 29] The LORD *is* far from the wicked: but he heareth the prayer of the righteous.

His ears are closed to the prayer of the wicked (1 Peter 3:12: “For the eyes of the Lord *are* over the righteous, and his ears *are open* unto their prayers: but the face of the Lord *is* against them that do evil.”).

- 30] The light of the eyes rejoiceth the heart: *and* a good report maketh the bones fat.
- 31] The ear that heareth the reproof of life abideth among the wise.
- 32] He that refuseth instruction despiseth his own soul: but he that heareth reproof getteth understanding.
- 33] The fear of the LORD *is* the instruction of wisdom; and before honour *is* humility.

Proverbs 16

Short sentences drawn from long experience...

- 1] The preparations of the heart in man, and the answer of the tongue, *is* from the LORD.

“Man proposes, but God disposes.”

- 2] All the ways of a man *are* clean in his own eyes; but the LORD weigheth the spirits.

Cf. Prov 14:12.

- 3] Commit thy works unto the LORD, and thy thoughts shall be established.
- 4] The LORD hath made all *things* for himself: yea, even the wicked for the day of evil.
- 5] Every one *that is* proud in heart *is* an abomination to the LORD: *though* hand *join* in hand, he shall not be unpunished.
- 6] By mercy and truth iniquity is purged: and by the fear of the LORD *men* depart from evil.
- 7] When a man's ways please the LORD, he maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him.
- 8] Better *is* a little with righteousness than great revenues without right.
- 9] A man's heart deviseth his way: but the LORD directeth his steps.
- 10] A divine sentence *is* in the lips of the king: his mouth transgresseth not in judgment.
- 11] A just weight and balance *are* the LORD'S: all the weights of the bag *are* his work.
- 12] *It is* an abomination to kings to commit wickedness: for the throne is established by righteousness.
- 13] Righteous lips *are* the delight of kings; and they love him that speaketh right.
- 14] The wrath of a king *is as* messengers of death: but a wise man will pacify it.
- 15] In the light of the king's countenance *is* life; and his favour *is* as a cloud of the latter rain.
- 16] How much better *is it* to get wisdom than gold! and to get understanding rather to be chosen than silver!
- 17] The highway of the upright *is* to depart from evil: he that keepeth his way preserveth his soul.

- 18] Pride *goeth* before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall.
- 19] Better *it is to be* of an humble spirit with the lowly, than to divide the spoil with the proud.
- 20] He that handleth a matter wisely shall find good: and whoso trusteth in the LORD, happy *is* he.
- 21] The wise in heart shall be called prudent: and the sweetness of the lips increaseth learning.
- 22] Understanding *is* a wellspring of life unto him that hath it: but the instruction of fools *is* folly.
- 23] The heart of the wise teacheth his mouth, and addeth learning to his lips.
- 24] Pleasant words *are as* an honeycomb, sweet to the soul, and health to the bones.
- 25] There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof *are* the ways of death.
- 26] He that laboureth laboureth for himself; for his mouth craveth it of him.
- 27] An ungodly man diggeth up evil: and in his lips *there is* as a burning fire.
- 28] A froward man soweth strife: and a whisperer separateth chief friends.

Some people will believe anything if it is whispered to them!
("Swift as a rumor; silent as a secret.")

- 29] A violent man enticeth his neighbour, and leadeth him into the way *that is* not good.
- 30] He shutteth his eyes to devise froward things: moving his lips he bringeth evil to pass.
- 31] The hoary head *is* a crown of glory, *if* it be found in the way of righteousness.
- 32] *He that is* slow to anger *is* better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city.
- 33] The lot is cast into the lap; but the whole disposing thereof *is* of the LORD.

There is no randomness in the Universe! [Both the concepts of randomness and infinity exist in mathematics but are not to be found in the physical universe!] Book of Esther: God intervened and delivered His people; and the Jewish Feast of Purim (meaning "lots") is a celebration of that providential day.

Proverbs 17

- 1] Better *is* a dry morsel, and quietness therewith, than an house full of sacrifices *with* strife.

Cf. Proverbs 15:17.

- 2] A wise servant shall have rule over a son that causeth shame, and shall have part of the inheritance among the brethren.
- 3] The fining pot *is* for silver, and the furnace for gold: but the LORD trieth the hearts.
- 4] A wicked doer giveth heed to false lips; *and* a liar giveth ear to a naughty tongue.
- 5] Whoso mocketh the poor reproacheth his Maker: *and* he that is glad at calamities shall not be unpunished.

THE BOOK OF PROVERBS

- 6] Children's children *are* the crown of old men; and the glory of children *are* their fathers.

Grandchildren: if I'd known how much fun they are, I'd have had them first. ("...Separated by a common enemy!")

- 7] Excellent speech becometh not a fool: much less do lying lips a prince.
8] A gift *is as* a precious stone in the eyes of him that hath it: whithersoever it turneth, it prospereth.
9] He that covereth a transgression seeketh love; but he that repeateth a matter separateth *very* friends.
10] A reproof entereth more into a wise man than an hundred stripes into a fool.
11] An evil *man* seeketh only rebellion: therefore a cruel messenger shall be sent against him.
12] Let a bear robbed of her whelps meet a man, rather than a fool in his folly.
13] Whoso rewardeth evil for good, evil shall not depart from his house.
14] The beginning of strife *is as* when one letteth out water: therefore leave off contention, before it be meddled with.
15] He that justifieth the wicked, and he that condemneth the just, even they both *are* abomination to the LORD.
16] Wherefore *is there* a price in the hand of a fool to get wisdom, seeing *he hath* no heart *to it*?
17] A friend loveth at all times, and a brother is born for adversity.

Note the "all"!

- 18] A man void of understanding striketh hands, *and* becometh surety in the presence of his friend.
19] He loveth transgression that loveth strife: *and* he that exalteth his gate seeketh destruction.
20] He that hath a froward heart findeth no good: and he that hath a perverse tongue falleth into mischief.
21] He that begetteth a fool *doeth it* to his sorrow: and the father of a fool hath no joy.
22] A merry heart doeth good *like* a medicine: but a broken spirit drieth the bones.
23] A wicked *man* taketh a gift out of the bosom to pervert the ways of judgment.
24] Wisdom *is* before him that hath understanding; but the eyes of a fool *are* in the ends of the earth.
25] A foolish son *is* a grief to his father, and bitterness to her that bare him.
26] Also to punish the just *is* not good, *nor* to strike princes for equity.
27] He that hath knowledge spareth his words: *and* a man of understanding is of an excellent spirit.
28] Even a fool, when he holdeth his peace, is counted wise: *and* he that shutteth his lips *is esteemed* a man of understanding.

This proverb has humor in it: ***It pays to keep your mouth shut.***

Proverbs 18

- 1] Through desire a man, having separated himself, seeketh *and* intermeddleth with all wisdom.

This is a difficult verse: Some take it as a rebuke to an affected singularity. Alternatively, it could be an encitement to diligence in the pursuit of wisdom. We must *separate ourselves* from all those things which would divert us from noise of this world's vanities, and *seek and intermeddle with all* the means and instructions of *wisdom*, that we may prove all things and hold fast that which is good.

- 2] A fool hath no delight in understanding, but that his heart may discover itself.
3] When the wicked cometh, *then* cometh also contempt, and with ignominy reproach.
4] The words of a man's mouth *are as* deep waters, *and* the wellspring of wisdom *as* a flowing brook.
5] *It is* not good to accept the person of the wicked, to overthrow the righteous in judgment.
6] A fool's lips enter into contention, and his mouth calleth for strokes.
7] A fool's mouth *is* his destruction, and his lips *are* the snare of his soul.
8] The words of a talebearer *are* as wounds, and they go down into the innermost parts of the belly.
9] He also that is slothful in his work is brother to him that is a great waster.
10] The name of the LORD *is* a strong tower: the righteous runneth into it, and is safe.
11] The rich man's wealth *is* his strong city, and as an high wall in his own conceit.
12] Before destruction the heart of man is haughty, and before honour *is* humility.
13] He that answereth a matter before he heareth *it*, *it is* folly and shame unto him.
14] The spirit of a man will sustain his infirmity; but a wounded spirit who can bear?
15] The heart of the prudent getteth knowledge; and the ear of the wise seeketh knowledge.
16] A man's gift maketh room for him, and bringeth him before great men.

“Joy is the flag that is flown in the heart when the Master is in residence.”

- 17] *He that is* first in his own cause *seemeth* just; but his neighbour cometh and searcheth him.
18] The lot causeth contentions to cease, and parteth between the mighty.
19] A brother offended *is harder to be won* than a strong city: and *their* contentions *are* like the bars of a castle.
20] A man's belly shall be satisfied with the fruit of his mouth; *and* with the increase of his lips shall he be filled.
21] Death and life *are* in the power of the tongue: and they that love it shall eat the fruit thereof.

Your tongue can be used to give out the Word, and this will give life. It can also be used to drive people away from God, which makes it an instrument of death.

- 22] *Whoso* findeth a wife findeth a good *thing*, and obtaineth favour of the LORD.
23] The poor useth intreaties; but the rich answereth roughly.
24] A man *that hath* friends must shew himself friendly: and there is a friend *that* sticketh closer than a brother.

Proverbs 19

- 1] Better *is* the poor that walketh in his integrity, than *he that is* perverse in his lips, and is a fool.
2] Also, *that* the soul *be* without knowledge, *it is* not good; and he that hasteth with *his* feet sinneth.
3] The foolishness of man perverteth his way: and his heart fretteth against the LORD.
4] Wealth maketh many friends; but the poor is separated from his neighbour.
5] A false witness shall not be unpunished, and *he that* speaketh lies shall not escape.
6] Many will intreat the favour of the prince: and every man *is* a friend to him that giveth gifts.
7] All the brethren of the poor do hate him: how much more do his friends go far from him? he pursueth *them with* words, *yet they are* wanting to *him*.
8] He that getteth wisdom loveth his own soul: he that keepeth understanding shall find good.
9] A false witness shall not be unpunished, and *he that* speaketh lies shall perish.
10] Delight is not seemly for a fool; much less for a servant to have rule over princes.
11] The discretion of a man deferreth his anger; and *it is* his glory to pass over a transgression.
12] The king's wrath *is* as the roaring of a lion; but his favour *is* as dew upon the grass.
13] A foolish son *is* the calamity of his father: and the contentions of a wife *are* a continual dropping.
14] House and riches *are* the inheritance of fathers: and a prudent wife *is* from the LORD.

I can testify to that!

- 15] Slothfulness casteth into a deep sleep; and an idle soul shall suffer hunger.
16] He that keepeth the commandment keepeth his own soul; *but* he that despiseth his ways shall die.
17] He that hath pity upon the poor lendeth unto the LORD; and that which he hath given will he pay him again.
18] Chasten thy son while there is hope, and let not thy soul spare for his crying.
19] A man of great wrath shall suffer punishment: for if thou deliver *him*, yet thou must do it again.
20] Hear counsel, and receive instruction, that thou mayest be wise in thy latter end.
21] *There are* many devices in a man's heart; nevertheless the counsel of the LORD, that shall stand.
22] The desire of a man *is* his kindness: and a poor man *is* better than a liar.
23] The fear of the LORD *tendeth* to life: and *he that hath it* shall abide satisfied; he shall not be visited with evil.

- 24] A slothful *man* hideth his hand in *his* bosom, and will not so much as bring it to his mouth again.

An alternate translation is: “A slothful man burieth his hand in the dish.”
Now *that’s* lazy!

- 25] Smite a scorner, and the simple will beware: and reprove one that hath understanding, *and* he will understand knowledge.
- 26] He that wasteth *his* father, *and* chaseth away *his* mother, *is* a son that causeth shame, and bringeth reproach.
- 27] Cease, my son, to hear the instruction *that causeth* to err from the words of knowledge.
- 28] An ungodly witness scorneth judgment: and the mouth of the wicked devoureth iniquity.
- 29] Judgments are prepared for scorners, and stripes for the back of fools.

Personal Proverbs Log

- Month #1: AM—Read the chapter for that date (1-31). PM—Record the verse that proved to be the most relevant for that day.
- Month #2: Repeat Month #1.
- Personal Discovery: The most relevant may have been tailored to *your* specific day!

Next Session

- Read Proverbs 20–24.
- Keep up your log book on Proverbs (above).

Summary (Review)

- ***We cannot avoid decisions***
 - “Decision determines destiny.”
 - We choose either the path of Wisdom or the path of Folly; we cannot postpone this decision or avoid it.
 - To choose one is to reject the other; to reject one is to choose the other.
 - What decision have *you* made? [Ex: Pascal’s Wager.]
- ***Sin is always alluring***
 - Folly does everything she can to make sin attractive
 - She never reveals her true nature; she never tells people that her house is the way to hell
 - The only way to detect Folly is to walk with Wisdom (Prov 2:10-22).
 - Those who walk with Wisdom, obeying the Word of God, will not easily be tricked by Folly.

- ***It takes time for judgment to fall***
 - The simple, the fool, and the scorner all thought they “had it made” when they rejected Wisdom, because nothing disastrous immediately happened.
 - But judgment eventually caught up with them.

Whatever a man sows, that he will also reap.

Galatians 6:7

- ***Satan appeals to the flesh***
 - The “wicked woman” (or “strange woman”) is appealing to the young man’s appetites. She tells him he can use his body as he pleases and not suffer for it.
 - Sexual sin leads to tragic results, both in body and soul.
- ***God continues to call***
 - So long as people will hear, God’s Spirit continues to call. But when sinners refuse to obey, their ears become deaf to the Word of God. Beware!

Today, if you will hear His voice, do not harden your hearts.

Hebrews 3:7ff

In these days of flagrant immorality (in movies, TV, music, advertising, etc.), it is important that young and old people keep their hearts and minds pure.

The Book of Proverbs Session 5

Chapters 20 - 24

Outline of the Book of Proverbs

- | | |
|--|-------------------|
| • Wisdom and Folly Contrasted | Prov 1–9 |
| • Proverbs of Solomon
<i>(Written and set in order by himself)</i> | Prov 10–24 |
| • Proverbs of Solomon
<i>(Set in order by men of Hezekiah)</i> | Prov 25–29 |
| • Oracle of Agur | Prov 30 |
| • Proverbs of Lemuel’s Mother | Prov 31 |

Proverbs 20

- 1] Wine *is* a mocker, strong drink *is* raging: and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise.

“Wine”: יַיִן *yayin*, most common word for wine, usually referred to fermented grape juice; תִּירוֹשׁ *tirosh* fresh grape juice;

“Strong drink”: שֵׁכָר *shekar*, referred to drinks made from barley, dates, or pomegranates.

Intoxication

This was forbidden for priests (Lev 10:9); Nazirites (Num 6:1-3); and others (Isa 5:11). Other passages that condemn drunkenness (Prov 23:20-21,29-35;31:4-5).

- 2] The fear of a king *is* as the roaring of a lion: *whoso* provoketh him to anger sinneth *against* his own soul.
- 3] *It is* an honour for a man to cease from strife: but every fool will be meddling.
- 4] The sluggard will not plow by reason of the cold; *therefore* shall he beg in harvest, and *have* nothing.

Winter: preparation for spring planting. Failure to work during the cold would leave the fields unplanted...Like the farmer with the leaky roof: didn't fix when raining; it didn't leak when it wasn't raining.

- 5] Counsel in the heart of man *is like* deep water; but a man of understanding will draw it out.
- 6] Most men will proclaim every one his own goodness: but a faithful man who can find?
- 7] The just *man* walketh in his integrity: his children *are* blessed after him.
- 8] A king that sitteth in the throne of judgment scattereth away all evil with his eyes.

The astonishing lack of integrity...“Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful”(1 Cor 4:2).

- 9] Who can say, I have made my heart clean, I am pure from my sin?
- 10] Divers weights, *and* divers measures, both of them *are* alike abomination to the LORD.
- 11] Even a child is known by his doings, whether his work *be* pure, and whether *it be* right.
- 12] The hearing ear, and the seeing eye, the LORD hath made even both of them.
- 13] Love not sleep, lest thou come to poverty; open thine eyes, *and* thou shalt be satisfied with bread.
- 14] *It is* naught, *it is* naught, saith the buyer: but when he is gone his way, then he boasteth.
- 15] There is gold, and a multitude of rubies: but the lips of knowledge *are* a precious jewel.
- 16] Take his garment that is surety *for* a stranger: and take a pledge of him for a strange woman.

Laziness vs. diligence... the key to success...

- 17] Bread of deceit *is* sweet to a man; but afterwards his mouth shall be filled with gravel.
- 18] *Every* purpose is established by counsel: and with good advice make war.
- 19] He that goeth about *as* a talebearer revealeth secrets: therefore meddle not with him that flattereth with his lips.
- 20] Whoso curseth his father or his mother, his lamp shall be put out in obscure darkness.

A person who cursed his parents violated the fifth commandment (Ex 20:12) and committed a capital offense. Death was the penalty for cursing (and rebelling against) parents (Ex 21:17; Lev 20:9). To have one's lamp snuffed out was a picturesque way of referring to death. (Pitch) darkness is literally, "pupil (of the eye) of darkness," referring to the darkest part of the night.

- 21] An inheritance *may be* gotten hastily at the beginning; but the end thereof shall not be blessed.

Cf. Prodigal son: Luke 15:11-20.

- 22] Say not thou, I will recompense evil; *but* wait on the LORD, and he shall save thee.

To take vengeance in one's hands is wrong (cf. Prov 17:13; 24:29; Deut 32:35; Rom 12:19).

- 23] Divers weights *are* an abomination unto the LORD; and a false balance *is* not good.
- 24] Man's goings *are* of the LORD; how can a man then understand his own way?
- 25] *It is* a snare to the man *who* devoureth *that which is* holy, and after vows to make enquiry.
- 26] A wise king scattereth the wicked, and bringeth the wheel over them.

The first of these responsibilities is suggested by **winnowing** and the second by **threshing**. In farming, grain is threshed before it is winnowed. In threshing, a sledge with spikes is pulled over the stalks of grain to separate the grain from the stalks and to free the seeds from the seed coverings (the chaff). In winnowing the farmer tosses up the grain so that the wind can carry away the unwanted chaff.

- 27] The spirit of man *is* the candle of the LORD, searching all the inward parts of the belly.
- 28] Mercy and truth preserve the king: and his throne is upholden by mercy.
- 29] The glory of young men *is* their strength: and the beauty of old men *is* the gray head.
- 30] The blueness of a wound cleanseth away evil: so *do* stripes the inward parts of the belly.

Proverbs 21

- 1] The king's heart *is* in the hand of the LORD, *as* the rivers of water: he turneth it whithersoever he will.
- 2] Every way of a man *is* right in his own eyes: but the LORD pondereth the hearts.

Man rationalizes, but God scrutinizes.

- 3] To do justice and judgment *is* more acceptable to the LORD than sacrifice.
- 4] An high look, and a proud heart, *and* the plowing of the wicked, *is* sin.

Eight times in this chapter the wicked are referred to (vv. 4, 7, 10, 12 [twice], 18, 27, 29).

God Directs the Hearts of Kings

- | | |
|--------------------|----------------------|
| • Pharaoh | Ex 10:1-2 |
| • Tiglath-Pileser | Isa 10:5-7 |
| • Cyrus | Isa 45:1-6 |
| • Artaxerxes | Ezra 7:21; Neh 2:1-8 |
| • God is sovereign | Prov 21:1, 30 |

- 5] The thoughts of the diligent *tend* only to plenteousness; but of every one *that is* hasty only to want.
- 6] The getting of treasures by a lying tongue *is* a vanity tossed to and fro of them that seek death.
- 7] The robbery of the wicked shall destroy them; because they refuse to do judgment.
- 8] The way of man *is* froward and strange: but *as for* the pure, his work *is* right.
- 9] *It is* better to dwell in a corner of the housetop, than with a brawling woman in a wide house.

This is the man who did not know what true happiness was until he got married—and then it was too late! Adverse examples: Job; David & Michel (Saul's daughter). The statement about a quarrelsome wife is repeated in 25:24.

- 10] The soul of the wicked desireth evil: his neighbour findeth no favour in his eyes.
- 11] When the scorner is punished, the simple is made wise: and when the wise is instructed, he receiveth knowledge.
- 12] The righteous *man* wisely considereth the house of the wicked: *but God* overthroweth the wicked *for their* wickedness.
- 13] Whoso stoppeth his ears at the cry of the poor, he also shall cry himself, but shall not be heard.
- 14] A gift in secret pacifieth anger: and a reward in the bosom strong wrath.

Jacob's gifts to Esau (Gen 32).

THE BOOK OF PROVERBS

- 15] *It is* joy to the just to do judgment: but destruction *shall be* to the workers of iniquity.
16] The man that wandereth out of the way of understanding shall remain in the congregation of the dead.

You can't rehabilitate criminals: they must be regenerated.

- 17] He that loveth pleasure *shall be* a poor man: he that loveth wine and oil shall not be rich.

Poverty (*masôr*) is yet another word for being poor: "deficient, destitute, or in need." It is used in Proverbs more often than in any other Old Testament book (Prov 6:11; 11:24; 14:23; 21:5, 17; 22:16; 24:34; 28:27). Proverbs 21:17a does not argue for a dismal, stoic life, but against living *only* for pleasure and self.

- 18] The wicked *shall be* a ransom for the righteous, and the transgressor for the upright.

"ransom" = become a ransom for, set free...

- 19] *It is* better to dwell in the wilderness, than with a contentious and an angry woman.
20] *There is* treasure to be desired and oil in the dwelling of the wise; but a foolish man spendeth it up.
21] He that followeth after righteousness and mercy findeth life, righteousness, and honour.
22] A wise *man* scaleth the city of the mighty, and casteth down the strength of the confidence thereof.
23] Whoso keepeth his mouth and his tongue keepeth his soul from troubles.
24] Proud *and* haughty scorner *is* his name, who dealeth in proud wrath.
25] The desire of the slothful killeth him; for his hands refuse to labour.
26] He coveteth greedily all the day long; but the righteous giveth and spareth not.
27] The sacrifice of the wicked *is* abomination: how much more, *when* he bringeth it with a wicked mind?
28] A false witness shall perish: but the man that heareth speaketh constantly.
29] A wicked man hardeneth his face: but *as for* the upright, he directeth his way.
30] *There is* no wisdom nor understanding nor counsel against the LORD.
31] The horse *is* prepared against the day of battle: but safety *is* of the LORD.

"For we can do nothing against the truth, but for the truth" (2 Cor 13:8).
"The Word of God is like a lion: turn it loose and it will defend itself."
(Charles Spurgeon)

Though an host should encamp against me, my heart shall not fear: though war should rise against me, in this will I be confident.

Psalm 27:3

And Asa cried unto the LORD his God, and said, LORD, it is nothing with thee to help, whether with many, or with them that have no power: help us,

O LORD our God; for we rest on thee, and in thy name we go against this multitude. O LORD, thou art our God; let not man prevail against thee.

2 Chronicles 14:18

Asa against Zerah the Ethiopian, with a million men and 300 chariots...and so the Lord smote the Ethiopians and they fled...

Proverbs 22

- 1] A *good* name *is* rather to be chosen than great riches, *and* loving favour rather than silver and gold.

“Good” is supplied: “A name is rather to be chosen...” Cf. Benaiah, (2 Sam 23:20,22). In our society, we have disconnected character from destiny.

- 2] The rich and poor meet together: the LORD *is* the maker of them all.

God is the Creator of all but not the Father of all (John 8:44).

- 3] A prudent *man* foreseeth the evil, and hideth himself: but the simple pass on, and are punished.

There is a proper role in forecasting: the “Issachar Track” of KI; 1 Chr 12:32.

- 4] By humility *and* the fear of the LORD *are* riches, and honour, and life.
5] Thorns *and* snares *are* in the way of the froward: he that doth keep his soul shall be far from them.
6] Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it.
7] The rich ruleth over the poor, and the borrower *is* servant to the lender.
8] He that soweth iniquity shall reap vanity: and the rod of his anger shall fail.
9] He that hath a bountiful eye shall be blessed; for he giveth of his bread to the poor.
10] Cast out the scorner, and contention shall go out; yea, strife and reproach shall cease.
11] He that loveth pureness of heart, *for* the grace of his lips the king *shall be* his friend.
12] The eyes of the LORD preserve knowledge, and he overthroweth the words of the transgressor.
13] The slothful *man* saith, *There is* a lion without, I shall be slain in the streets.
14] The mouth of strange women *is* a deep pit: he that is abhorred of the LORD shall fall therein.
15] Foolishness *is* bound in the heart of a child; *but* the rod of correction shall drive it far from him.
16] He that oppresseth the poor to increase his *riches*, *and* he that giveth to the rich, *shall* surely *come* to want.

The Sayings of the Wise Men: Proverbs 22:17-24:34

- The 1st part is introduced as “the sayings of the wise” (Prov 22:17).
- The 2nd part is introduced by the statement, “These also are the sayings of the wise” (Prov 24:23).
- This section includes 20 instances in which two verses express a complete thought, rather than one verse as in Prov 10:1-22:16.
 - 7 verses have 3 lines rather than the normal two lines (Prov 22:29; 23:5, 29, 31; 24:14, 27, 31)
 - 2 verses each have 4 lines (Prov 23:7; 24:12).

Also, “my son” occurs five times (Prov 23:15, 19, 26; 24:13, 21) whereas it occurs 15 times in Chapters 1-9 and only once in 10:1-22:16 and twice in the remainder of the book (27:11; 31:2).

The Instruction of *Amen-em-Ope*

- The 1st portion (Prov 22:17-24:22) includes 30 sayings as does a similar Egyptian work.
- Some scholars suggest that the “wise men” borrowed from an Egyptian work.
- If this work was written 500 or 600 years before Christ, its date was still:
 - later than Solomon’s time (971-931 B.C.).
 - later than Hezekiah’s reign (715-686 B.C.).

Divinely Authorized

All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness.

2 Timothy 3:16

- 17] Bow down thine ear, and hear the words of the wise, and apply thine heart unto my knowledge.
- 18] For *it is* a pleasant thing if thou keep them within thee; they shall withal be fitted in thy lips.
- 19] That thy trust may be in the LORD, I have made known to thee this day, even to thee.
- 20] Have not I written to thee excellent things in counsels and knowledge,
- 21] That I might make thee know the certainty of the words of truth; that thou mightest answer the words of truth to them that send unto thee?
- 22] Rob not the poor, because he *is* poor: neither oppress the afflicted in the gate:
- 23] For the LORD will plead their cause, and spoil the soul of those that spoiled them.
- 24] Make no friendship with an angry man; and with a furious man thou shalt not go:

- 25] Lest thou learn his ways, and get a snare to thy soul.
- 26] Be not thou *one* of them that strike hands, *or* of them that are sureties for debts.
- 27] If thou hast nothing to pay, why should he take away thy bed from under thee?
- 28] Remove not the ancient landmark, which thy fathers have set.

Cf. Deut 19:14: Six times the Bible mentions the sin of moving boundary stones (Deut 19:14; 27:17; Job 24:2; Prov. 22:28; 23:10; Hosea 5:10) ***Moral landmarks and doctrinal landmarks are included.***

- 29] Seest thou a man diligent in his business? he shall stand before kings; he shall not stand before mean *men*.

God always rewards the diligent! (He will never become your debtor!)

Proverbs 23

Don't make a pig of yourself! Appetites can be a pit-fall...

- 1] When thou sittest to eat with a ruler, consider diligently what *is* before thee:
- 2] And put a knife to thy throat, if thou *be* a man given to appetite.
- 3] Be not desirous of his dainties: for they *are* deceitful meat.
- 4] Labour not to be rich: cease from thine own wisdom.

Money shouldn't be an object; for some, it is simply a way of keeping score...

- 5] Wilt thou set thine eyes upon that which is not? for *riches* certainly make themselves wings; they fly away as an eagle toward heaven.
- 6] Eat thou not the bread of *him that hath* an evil eye, neither desire thou his dainty meats:
- 7] For as he thinketh in his heart, so *is* he: Eat and drink, saith he to thee; but his heart *is* not with thee.
- 8] The morsel *which* thou hast eaten shalt thou vomit up, and lose thy sweet words.
- 9] Speak not in the ears of a fool: for he will despise the wisdom of thy words.
- 10] Remove not the old landmark; and enter not into the fields of the fatherless:
- 11] For their redeemer *is* mighty; he shall plead their cause with thee.
- 12] Apply thine heart unto instruction, and thine ears to the words of knowledge.
- 13] Withhold not correction from the child: for *if* thou beatest him with the rod, he shall not die.

The correction is to be for discipline, not punishment.

- 14] Thou shalt beat him with the rod, and shalt deliver his soul from hell.
- 15] My son, if thine heart be wise, my heart shall rejoice, even mine.
- 16] Yea, my reins shall rejoice, when thy lips speak right things.
- 17] Let not thine heart envy sinners: but *be thou* in the fear of the LORD all the day long.

THE BOOK OF PROVERBS

- 18] For surely there is an end; and thine expectation shall not be cut off.
- 19] Hear thou, my son, and be wise, and guide thine heart in the way.
- 20] Be not among winebibbers; among riotous eaters of flesh:
- 21] For the drunkard and the glutton shall come to poverty: and drowsiness shall clothe *a man* with rags.

Evil companions produce evil manners (1 Cor 15:33).

- 22] Hearken unto thy father that begat thee, and despise not thy mother when she is old.
- 23] Buy the truth, and sell *it* not; *also* wisdom, and instruction, and understanding.
- 24] The father of the righteous shall greatly rejoice: and he that begetteth a wise *child* shall have joy of him.
- 25] Thy father and thy mother shall be glad, and she that bare thee shall rejoice.
- 26] My son, give me thine heart, and let thine eyes observe my ways.
- 27] For a whore *is* a deep ditch; and a strange woman *is* a narrow pit.
- 28] She also lieth in wait *as for* a prey, and increaseth the transgressors among men.
- 29] Who hath woe? who hath sorrow? who hath contentions? who hath babbling? who hath wounds without cause? who hath redness of eyes?
- 30] They that tarry long at the wine; they that go to seek mixed wine.
- 31] Look not thou upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth his colour in the cup, *when* it moveth itself aright.
- 32] At the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder.
- 33] Thine eyes shall behold strange women, and thine heart shall utter perverse things.
- 34] Yea, thou shalt be as he that lieth down in the midst of the sea, or as he that lieth upon the top of a mast.
- 35] They have stricken me, *shalt thou say*, and I was not sick; they have beaten me, *and* I felt *it* not: when shall I awake? I will seek it yet again.

Proverbs 24

This is the last chapter of the proverbs that Solomon arranged himself. In the next session we come to those which were arranged by the men of Hezekiah.

- 1] Be not thou envious against evil men, neither desire to be with them.
- 2] For their heart studieth destruction, and their lips talk of mischief.
- 3] Through wisdom is an house builded; and by understanding it is established:
- 4] And by knowledge shall the chambers be filled with all precious and pleasant riches.
- 5] A wise man *is* strong; yea, a man of knowledge increaseth strength.

I don't believe in "Bible Roulette." We need the "whole counsel of God."

- 6] For by wise counsel thou shalt make thy war: and in multitude of counsellors *there is* safety.
- 7] Wisdom *is* too high for a fool: he openeth not his mouth in the gate.

- 8] He that deviseth to do evil shall be called a mischievous person.
- 9] The thought of foolishness *is* sin: and the scorner *is* an abomination to men.
- 10] *If* thou faint in the day of adversity, thy strength *is* small.
- 11] If thou forbear to deliver *them that are* drawn unto death, and *those that are* ready to be slain;
- 12] If thou sayest, Behold, we knew it not; doth not he that pondereth the heart consider *it*? and he that keepeth thy soul, doth *not* he know *it*? and shall *not* he render to *every* man according to his works?

But remember, even Elijah ran from Jezebel; David fled from Saul; etc. Yet we should reach out to people in need of help...

- 13] My son, eat thou honey, because *it is* good; and the honeycomb, *which is* sweet to thy taste:
- 14] So *shall* the knowledge of wisdom *be* unto thy soul: when thou hast found *it*, then there shall be a reward, and thy expectation shall not be cut off.
- 15] Lay not wait, O wicked *man*, against the dwelling of the righteous; spoil not his resting place:
- 16] For a just *man* falleth seven times, and riseth up again: but the wicked shall fall into mischief.

Compare Peter (always falling) with Judas.

- 17] Rejoice not when thine enemy falleth, and let not thine heart be glad when he stumbleth:
- 18] Lest the LORD see *it*, and it displease him, and he turn away his wrath from him.
- 19] Fret not thyself because of evil *men*, neither be thou envious at the wicked;

Cf. v.1. Repetition for emphasis.

- 20] For there shall be no reward to the evil *man*; the candle of the wicked shall be put out.
- 21] My son, fear thou the LORD and the king: *and* meddle not with them that are given to change:
- 22] For their calamity shall rise suddenly; and who knoweth the ruin of them both?
- 23] These *things* also *belong* to the wise. *It is* not good to have respect of persons in judgment.
- 24] He that saith unto the wicked, Thou *art* righteous; him shall the people curse, nations shall abhor him:

The curse of injustice. Courts which fail at their appointed mandates... Do you know of any? The continuing curse of the lack of accountability...

- 25] But to them that rebuke *him* shall be delight, and a good blessing shall come upon them.
- 26] *Every man* shall kiss *his* lips that giveth a right answer.

THE BOOK OF PROVERBS

- 27] Prepare thy work without, and make it fit for thyself in the field; and afterwards build thine house.
- 28] Be not a witness against thy neighbour without cause; and deceive *not* with thy lips.
- 29] Say not, I will do so to him as he hath done to me: I will render to the man according to his work.
- 30] I went by the field of the slothful, and by the vineyard of the man void of understanding;
- 31] And, lo, it was all grown over with thorns, *and* nettles had covered the face thereof, and the stone wall thereof was broken down.
- 32] Then I saw, *and* considered *it* well: I looked upon *it*, *and* received instruction.
- 33] *Yet* a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep:
- 34] So shall thy poverty come *as* one that travelleth; and thy want as an armed man.

Next Session

- Read Proverbs 25–29.
- Keep up your logbook on Proverbs.

The Book of Proverbs Session 6 Chapters 25 - 29

Outline of the Book of Proverbs

- | | |
|--|-------------------|
| • Wisdom and Folly Contrasted | Prov 1–9 |
| • Proverbs of Solomon
(<i>Written and set in order by himself</i>) | Prov 10–24 |
| • Proverbs of Solomon
(<i>Set in order by men of Hezekiah</i>) | Prov 25–29 |
| • Oracle of Agur | Prov 30 |
| • Proverbs of Lemuel's Mother | Prov 31 |

Proverbs 25

- 1] These *are* also proverbs of Solomon, which the men of Hezekiah king of Judah copied out.
- 2] *It is* the glory of God to conceal a thing; but the honour of kings *is* to search out a matter.

The gateway to “hidden messages:” ELs, Proverbs 30, et al.

Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me.

John 5:39

Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth?

2 Timothy 2:15

Paul wrote the same thing... Yet they are inexhaustible; and beyond the comprehension of man. “For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts” (Isa 55:9).

- 3] The heaven for height, and the earth for depth, and the heart of kings *is* unsearchable.
- 4] Take away the dross from the silver, and there shall come forth a vessel for the finer.
- 5] Take away the wicked *from* before the king, and his throne shall be established in righteousness.

How is the Lord taking away *your* “dross”? We need to have the right kind of advisers around...

- 6] Put not forth thyself in the presence of the king, and stand not in the place of great *men*:
- 7] For better *it is* that it be said unto thee, Come up hither; than that thou shouldest be put lower in the presence of the prince whom thine eyes have seen.

(Cf. Lk 14:7–10). Always on parade.

- 8] Go not forth hastily to strive, lest *thou know not* what to do in the end thereof, when thy neighbour hath put thee to shame.
- 9] Debate thy cause with thy neighbour *himself*; and discover not a secret to another:
- 10] Lest he that heareth *it* put thee to shame, and thine infamy turn not away.

“When a king is ready to go forth to war, he ought to sit down and see whether he’s going to be able to get the victory. And if he sees that he can’t carry on the warfare, then he ought to send an ambassador to make a peace treaty with the enemy” (cf. Lk 14:31–32). Also, OT version of Matthew 18:15ff.

- 11] A word fitly spoken *is like* apples of gold in pictures of silver.
- 12] *As* an earring of gold, and an ornament of fine gold, *so is* a wise reprover upon an obedient ear.

A beautiful simile: “Apples of gold.” A “word fitly spoken” is a gift, indeed.

- 13] As the cold of snow in the time of harvest, *so is* a faithful messenger to them that send him: for he refresheth the soul of his masters.

THE BOOK OF PROVERBS

In that land it gets really hot at the time of harvest; they would go up to Mount Hermon and pack some of the snow... We appreciate faithful people...

- 14] Whoso boasteth himself of a false gift *is like* clouds and wind without rain.

The apostates in the last days: Jude describes them as being clouds without water, fruit trees without fruit, “Raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame ...” (Jude 12–13).

- 15] By long forbearing is a prince persuaded, and a soft tongue breaketh the bone.
16] Hast thou found honey? eat so much as is sufficient for thee, lest thou be filled therewith, and vomit it.

In the Old Testament, honey illustrates *natural* sweetness. But don’t overdo it.

- 17] Withdraw thy foot from thy neighbour’s house; lest he be weary of thee, and *so* hate thee.

Do not to wear out your welcome at a place...

- 18] A man that beareth false witness against his neighbour *is* a maul, and a sword, and a sharp arrow.
19] Confidence in an unfaithful man in time of trouble *is like* a broken tooth, and a foot out of joint.
20] *As* he that taketh away a garment in cold weather, *and as* vinegar upon nitre, *so is* he that singeth songs to an heavy heart.

Know any of these?

- 21] If thine enemy be hungry, give him bread to eat; and if he be thirsty, give him water to drink:

Cf. Sermon on the Mount...

- 22] For thou shalt heap coals of fire upon his head, and the LORD shall reward thee.

Cf. Romans 12:20.

- 23] The north wind driveth away rain: so *doth* an angry countenance a backbiting tongue.
24] *It is* better to dwell in the corner of the housetop, than with a brawling woman and in a wide house.

Solomon should know! Can you imagine: 700 + 300!?

- 25] *As* cold waters to a thirsty soul, so *is* good news from a far country.
26] A righteous man falling down before the wicked *is as* a troubled fountain, and a corrupt spring.

The corruption of not speaking up when we should. The only thing required for evil to triumph is for good men to do nothing.

- 27] *It is* not good to eat much honey: so *for men* to search their own glory *is not* glory.
28] He that *hath* no rule over his own spirit *is like* a city *that is* broken down, and without walls.

Proverbs 26

Much to say about “a fool.” (Not speaking about a mental deficiency. Statistically, One is four people suffer from a mental problem. If you know three people who are OK, then you may be the one!)

- 1] As snow in summer, and as rain in harvest, so honour is not seemly for a fool.
2] As the bird by wandering, as the swallow by flying, so the curse causeless shall not come.

Predictions that certain things will come to pass do not always happen.

- 3] A whip for the horse, a bridle for the ass, and a rod for the fool’s back.

The horse and the ass can be trained.

- 4] Answer not a fool according to his folly, lest thou also be like unto him.
5] Answer a fool according to his folly, lest he be wise in his own conceit.

This only appears contradictory: There are two lines of conduct set before us, and we need to determine whether we should or should not respond.

- 6] He that sendeth a message by the hand of a fool cutteth off the feet, *and* drinketh damage.
7] The legs of the lame are not equal: so *is* a parable in the mouth of fools.
8] As he that bindeth a stone in a sling, so *is* he that giveth honour to a fool.

Giving honor to a fool is simply giving him ammunition.

- 9] *As* a thorn goeth up into the hand of a drunkard, so *is* a parable in the mouth of fools.
10] The great *God* that formed all *things* both rewardeth the fool, and rewardeth transgressors.

Tares and the wheat...

THE BOOK OF PROVERBS

- 11] As a dog returneth to his vomit, *so* a fool returneth to his folly.

“But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire” (2 Pet 2:22).

- 12] Seest thou a man wise in his own conceit? *there is* more hope of a fool than of him.

The pitfall of pride. Cf. Prov 18:11; 26:5, 12; 28:11 (cf. Rom 11:25!).

- 13] The slothful *man* saith, *There is* a lion in the way; a lion *is* in the streets.
14] *As* the door turneth upon his hinges, *so doth* the slothful upon his bed.
15] The slothful hideth his hand in *his* bosom; it grieveth him to bring it again to his mouth.
16] The sluggard *is* wiser in his own conceit than seven men that can render a reason.
17] He that passeth by, *and* meddleth with strife *belonging* not to him, *is like* one that taketh a dog by the ears.
18] As a mad *man* who casteth firebrands, arrows, and death,
19] *So is* the man *that* deceiveth his neighbour, and saith, Am not I in sport?
20] Where no wood is, *there* the fire goeth out: so where *there is* no talebearer, the strife ceaseth.
21] *As* coals *are* to burning coals, and wood to fire; *so is* a contentious man to kindle strife.
22] The words of a talebearer *are* as wounds, and they go down into the innermost parts of the belly.

Now here we have one of the longest and strongest sections against hypocrisy, and it refers to hypocrisy among God's people.

- 23] Burning lips and a wicked heart *are like* a potsherd covered with silver dross.
24] He that hateth dissembleth with his lips, and layeth up deceit within him;
25] When he speaketh fair, believe him not: for *there are* seven abominations in his heart.
26] *Whose* hatred is covered by deceit, his wickedness shall be shewed before the *whole* congregation.

27] Whoso diggeth a pit shall fall therein: and he that rolleth a stone, it will return upon him.
28] A lying tongue hateth *those that are* afflicted by it; and a flattering mouth worketh ruin.

Remember how Haman flattered... There is probably no place in the world where there is so much cover-up as in the church.

It is common for men to hate those whom they have injured.

Tacitus

Conscious of having wronged another, and being determined not to confess it, the dissembler will store his heart with hatred against the object of his

wrongdoing. To hide his wretched feelings, such a one will flatter with his lips while all the time he is plotting the ruin of his victim.

H.A. Ironside

Proverbs 27

- 1] Boast not thyself of to morrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth.

Plan, but don't depend: watch out for non-linearities! Also, don't procrastinate. Spanish proverb: "The road of by-and-by leads to the house of never." English proverb: "Procrastination is the thief of time." "The way to hell is paved with good intentions."

- 2] Let another man praise thee, and not thine own mouth; a stranger, and not thine own lips.

Cf. Prov 25:6,7.

- 3] A stone *is* heavy, and the sand weighty; but a fool's wrath *is* heavier than them both.

If you have a fool angry with you, you are in trouble, because a fool has no discretion. He will say and do anything.

- 4] Wrath *is* cruel, and anger *is* outrageous; but who *is* able to stand before envy?

The brothers sold Joseph into slavery because of their intense jealousy.

- 5] Open rebuke *is* better than secret love.

- 6] Faithful *are* the wounds of a friend; but the kisses of an enemy *are* deceitful.

It is a wonderful thing to have a friend who will call attention to your faults in a helpful way.

- 7] The full soul loatheth an honeycomb; but to the hungry soul every bitter thing is sweet.

- 8] As a bird that wandereth from her nest, so *is* a man that wandereth from his place.

- 9] Ointment and perfume rejoice the heart: so *doth* the sweetness of a man's friend by hearty counsel.

- 10] Thine own friend, and thy father's friend, forsake not; neither go into thy brother's house in the day of thy calamity: *for* better *is* a neighbour *that is* near than a brother far off.

- 11] My son, be wise, and make my heart glad, that I may answer him that reproacheth me.

- 12] A prudent *man* foreseeth the evil, *and* hideth himself; *but* the simple pass on, *and* are punished.

Y2K examples. Cf. Sons of Issachar: 1 Chr 12:32. Buy insurance.

THE BOOK OF PROVERBS

- 13] Take his garment that is surety for a stranger, and take a pledge of him for a strange woman.
14] He that blesseth his friend with a loud voice, rising early in the morning, it shall be counted a curse to him.

Politicians have done this since Absalom (see 2 Sam 15:1-6). Flattery is like perfume. The idea is to smell it, not swallow it.

- 15] A continual dropping in a very rainy day and a contentious woman are alike.
16] Whosoever hideth her hideth the wind, and the ointment of his right hand, *which* bewrayeth *itself*.
17] Iron sharpeneth iron; so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend.

The joy of competent companionship!...

- 18] Whoso keepeth the fig tree shall eat the fruit thereof: so he that waiteth on his master shall be honoured.
19] As in water face *answereth* to face, so the heart of man to man.

A friend is one who knows you and still loves you.

- 20] Hell and destruction are never full; so the eyes of man are never satisfied.
21] *As* the fining pot for silver, and the furnace for gold; so *is* a man to his praise.

Watch out for praise; it can be a trap.

- 22] Though thou shouldest bray a fool in a mortar among wheat with a pestle, *yet* will not his foolishness depart from him.
23] Be thou diligent to know the state of thy flocks, *and* look well to thy herds.

The need for diligent accounting for effective stewardship.

- 24] For riches *are* not for ever: and doth the crown *endure* to every generation?

“Riches are not for ever”—There are no pockets in a shroud. You won’t be taking your riches with you; you need to send them on ahead!

There is no hotter crucible to test a man than when he is put through a fire of praise and adulation. To go on through evil report, cleaving to the Lord, and counting on Him to clear one’s name is comparatively easy, though many faint in such circumstances; but to humbly pursue the even tenor of his way, undisturbed and unlifted up by applause and flattery, marks a man as being truly with God?

H.A. Ironside

Notes on the Book of Proverbs, pp. 390–391

- 25] The hay appeareth, and the tender grass sheweth itself, and herbs of the mountains are gathered.

- 26] The lambs *are* for thy clothing, and the goats *are* the price of the field.
- 27] And *thou shalt have* goats' milk enough for thy food, for the food of thy household, and *for* the maintenance for thy maidens.

A time for gathering...

The role of guilt: in literature; in psychology. No remedy but Christ.

Proverbs 28

- 1] The wicked flee when no man pursueth: but the righteous are bold as a lion.
- 2] For the transgression of a land many *are* the princes thereof: but by a man of understanding *and* knowledge the state *thereof* shall be prolonged.
- 3] A poor man that oppresseth the poor *is like* a sweeping rain which leaveth no food.
- 4] They that forsake the law praise the wicked: but such as keep the law contend with them.

The Rule of Law: [a heritage abandoned...]

- 5] Evil men understand not judgment: but they that seek the LORD understand all *things*.
- 6] Better *is* the poor that walketh in his uprightness, than *he that is* perverse in *his* ways, though he *be* rich.
- 7] Whoso keepeth the law *is* a wise son: but he that is a companion of riotous *men* shameth his father.
- 8] He that by usury and unjust gain increaseth his substance, he shall gather it for him that will pity the poor.
- 9] He that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer *shall be* abomination.

If you want God to hear you, you must hear Him first (1 Pet 3:12).

- 10] Whoso causeth the righteous to go astray in an evil way, he shall fall himself into his own pit: but the upright shall have good *things* in possession.

Haman's "gallows."

- 11] The rich man *is* wise in his own conceit; but the poor that hath understanding searcheth him out.
- 12] When righteous *men* do rejoice, *there is* great glory: but when the wicked rise, a man is hidden.
- 13] He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh *them* shall have mercy.

Band-Aids of silence wrapped over the cancer of sin (Cf. 1 John 1:9).

- 14] Happy *is* the man that feareth alway: but he that hardeneth his heart shall fall into mischief.

THE BOOK OF PROVERBS

- 15] *As* a roaring lion, and a ranging bear; *so is* a wicked ruler over the poor people.
- 16] The prince that wanteth understanding *is* also a great oppressor: *but* he that hateth covetousness shall prolong *his* days.
- 17] A man that doeth violence to the blood of *any* person shall flee to the pit; let no man stay him.
- 18] Whoso walketh uprightly shall be saved: but *he that is* perverse in *his* ways shall fall at once.
- 19] He that tilleth his land shall have plenty of bread: but he that followeth after vain *persons* shall have poverty enough.
- 20] A faithful man shall abound with blessings: but he that maketh haste to be rich shall not be innocent.
- 21] To have respect of persons *is* not good: for for a piece of bread *that* man will transgress.
- 22] He that hasteth to be rich *hath* an evil eye, and considereth not that poverty shall come upon him.
- 23] He that rebuketh a man afterwards shall find more favour than he that flattereth with the tongue.
- 24] Whoso robbeth his father or his mother, and saith, *It is* no transgression; the same *is* the companion of a destroyer.

The Lord Jesus rebuked the religious rulers of His day because they taught that as soon as a person had said to his father or mother, “It is Corban” or “I have dedicated to God that which would relieve your need” (see Matt. 15:5-6; Mark 7:11), he thereby consecrated all to God and was freed from using it for his parents. Incidentally, if you are a parent, you should not ignore acts of theft in the home.

- 25] He that is of a proud heart stirreth up strife: but he that putteth his trust in the LORD shall be made fat.
- 26] He that trusteth in his own heart is a fool: but whoso walketh wisely, he shall be delivered.
- 27] He that giveth unto the poor shall not lack: but he that hideth his eyes shall have many a curse.
- 28] When the wicked rise, men hide themselves: but when they perish, the righteous increase.

Proverbs 29

- 1] He, that being often reproveth hardeneth *his* neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy.

We think of Korah, and Dathan and Abiram, Belshazzar, Jezebel, and others.

- 2] When the righteous are in authority, the people rejoice: but when the wicked beareth rule, the people mourn.

- 3] Whoso loveth wisdom rejoiceth his father: but he that keepeth company with harlots spendeth *his* substance.
- 4] The king by judgment establisheth the land: but he that receiveth gifts overthroweth it.
- 5] A man that flattereth his neighbour spreadeth a net for his feet.
- 6] In the transgression of an evil man *there is* a snare: but the righteous doth sing and rejoice.
- 7] The righteous considereth the cause of the poor: *but* the wicked regardeth not to know *it*.
- 8] Scornful men bring a city into a snare: but wise *men* turn away wrath.
- 9] *If* a wise man contendeth with a foolish man, whether he rage or laugh, *there is* no rest.
- 10] The bloodthirsty hate the upright: but the just seek his soul.
- 11] A fool uttereth all his mind: but a wise *man* keepeth it in till afterwards.

Cf. Proverbs 17:28. Even a fool, when he holdeth his peace, is counted wise: and he that shutteth his lips is esteemed a man of understanding.

- 12] If a ruler hearken to lies, all his servants *are* wicked.

The people will imitate their rulers and men in high position.

- 13] The poor and the deceitful man meet together: the LORD lighteneth both their eyes.
- 14] The king that faithfully judgeth the poor, his throne shall be established for ever.
- 15] The rod and reproof give wisdom: but a child left *to himself* bringeth his mother to shame.
- 16] When the wicked are multiplied, transgression increaseth: but the righteous shall see their fall.
- 17] Correct thy son, and he shall give thee rest; yea, he shall give delight unto thy soul.
- 18] Where *there is* no vision, the people perish: but he that keepeth the law, happy *is* he.
- 19] A servant will not be corrected by words: for though he understand he will not answer.
- 20] Seest thou a man *that is* hasty in his words? *there is* more hope of a fool than of him.
- 21] He that delicately bringeth up his servant from a child shall have him become *his* son at the length.
- 22] An angry man stirreth up strife, and a furious man aboundeth in transgression.
- 23] A man's pride shall bring him low: but honour shall uphold the humble in spirit.
- 24] Whoso is partner with a thief hateth his own soul: he heareth cursing, and bewrayeth *it* not.
- 25] The fear of man bringeth a snare: but whoso putteth his trust in the LORD shall be safe.
- 26] Many seek the ruler's favour; but *every* man's judgment *cometh* from the LORD.
- 27] An unjust man *is* an abomination to the just: and *he that is* upright in the way *is* abomination to the wicked.

This chapter concludes the collection of proverbs that were copied out by the men of Hezekiah. It concludes all the proverbs which are attributed to King Solomon. [However, I believe that the final chapters of Proverbs was also written by Solomon and that he is King Lemuel.]

Next Session

Read Proverbs 30, 31. Summarize any insights from Proverbs 30:1-5. “The words of Agur the son of Jakeh, *even* the prophecy: the man spake unto Ithiel, even unto Ithiel and Ucal, Surely I *am* more brutish than *any* man, and have not the understanding of a man. I neither learned wisdom, nor have the knowledge of the holy.”

The Book of Proverbs Session 7 Chapter 30: What’s in a Name?

Outline of the Book of Proverbs

- | | |
|---|----------------|
| • Wisdom and Folly Contrasted | Prov 1–9 |
| • Proverbs of Solomon
(<i>Written and set in order by himself</i>) | Prov 10–24 |
| • Proverbs of Solomon
(<i>Set in order by men of Hezekiah</i>) | Prov 25–29 |
| • Oracle of Agur | Prov 30 |
| • Proverbs of Lemuel’s Mother | Prov 31 |

Authorship: Solomon

- Wrote 3,000 proverbs (1 Kings 4:32).
- Was the wisest person in his day (1 Kings 4:29-44).
- Since Solomon reigned from 971 to 931, the Proverbs he wrote may be dated in the 10th century.
- Chapters 25-29 were written by Solomon but were compiled by men of Hezekiah (Prov 25:1) Since Hezekiah reigned from 729 to 686.

Divinely Authorized

- God is the Author of all Scripture (2 Tim. 3:16).

All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof for correction, for instruction in righteousness.

2 Timothy 3:16

θεόπνευστος = God-breathed.

“All Scripture is . . . profitable” in four ways: for *doctrine*—what’s right; for *reproof*—what’s not right; for *correction*—how to get right; and for *instruction in righteousness*—how to stay right.

Hebrew Hermeneutics

- **Peshat**: the literal, direct meaning.
- **Remez**: an allegorical significance; a hint of something deeper.
- **Derash**: the homiletical, or practical application.
- **Sod**: the mystical or hidden meaning.

This paradigm emerged before the 12th century (Moses de Leon), and the rabbis use the mnemonic, *PaRDeS* (The Garden, or Paradise), to remember them. The first three have their parallels in traditional Christian hermeneutics (yet we would probably order them with *Remez* as third, and *Derash* as second, but that would spoil their mnemonic).

Proverbs 30

- 1] The words of Agur the son of Jakeh, *even* the prophecy: the man spake unto Ithiel, even unto Ithiel and Ucal,

אגור Agur

- From *agar*, “to collect.”
 - “The collector,” possibly a symbolical name (cf. Ecclesiastes, “the preacher” : the *Kohleth*)
 - May symbolize Solomon (*Rashi* and *Jerome*).
- Solomon had several names:
 - Jedidiah, “beloved by Jehovah,” the name which, by Nathan, the Lord gave to Solomon at birth (2 Sam 12:25).
 - (possibly) Lemuel, “devoted to God.”
- He was the son of Jakeh, a mysterious collector of wise sayings and, ostensibly, inspired counsels to Ithiel and Ucal.

The proverbs of Solomon the son of David, king of Israel; To know wisdom and instruction; to perceive the words of understanding; To receive the instruction of wisdom, justice, and judgment, 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.

Proverbs 1:1-6

“Dark sayings” חִידָה *chiydah*: Riddle, parable, enigma (to be guessed), enigmatic or perplexing saying or question, dark obscure utterance.

*I will open my mouth in a parable: I will utter **dark sayings** of old: Which we have heard and known, and our fathers have told us.*

Psalms 78:2,3

בְּרִיקָה Son of Jakeh

- Jakeh, from *yaqeh*: “carefully religious,” “obedient,” or “pious,”
- Agur was the son of Jakeh, a mysterious collector of wise sayings and, ostensibly, inspired counsels to Ithiel and Ucal.
- The father of Agur would thus be David

הַמָּשָׂא נְאֻם הַגִּבֹּרָה “Even the prophecy the man spake”(?)

This is an imputed translation from difficult Hebrew:

- | | | |
|---------------|------------------|----------------------|
| • הַמָּשָׂא | <i>ha massa</i> | the burden, prophecy |
| • נְאֻם | <i>ne’um</i> | oracle |
| • הַגִּבֹּרָה | <i>ha-gebber</i> | the mighty |

“the mighty oracle prophesied...”

יִתְיָאֵל Ithiel

- “God comes, arrives, is with me;” equivalent to Immanuel, “God with us” (Isaiah 7:14; 8:8).

אֶכָּל Ucal

- a verb: *’ukhal*, to be consumed. “God arrives to be consumed” (?)

“The words gathered of the wise son of the pious father, the prophecy of the mighty oracle: that El (God) arrives to be consumed.”

I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world. The Jews therefore strove among themselves, saying, How can this man give us his flesh to eat? Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him. As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father: so he that eateth

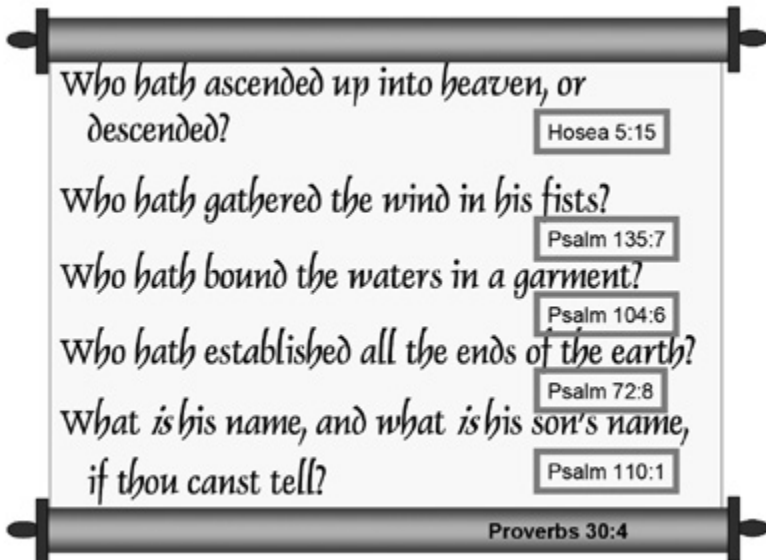
me, even he shall live by me. This is that bread which came down from heaven: not as your fathers did eat manna, and are dead: he that eateth of this bread shall live for ever.

John 6:51-58

- 2] Surely I am more brutish than any man, And have not the understanding of a man.
- 3] I neither learned wisdom, **nor** have the knowledge of the holy.

No negative in the Hebrew: It should read “I was not taught wisdom, and I have knowledge of the Holies.”

- 4] Who hath ascended up into heaven, or descended? Who hath gathered the wind in his fists? Who hath bound the waters in a garment? Who hath established all the ends of the earth? What *is* his name, and what *is* his son’s name, if thou canst tell?



While the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them, Saying, What think ye of Christ? Whose son is he? They say unto him, The Son of David. He saith unto them, How then doth David in spirit call him Lord, saying, [quoting Psalm 110:1] The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool? If David then call him Lord, how is he his son? And no man was able to answer him a word, neither durst any man from that day forth ask him any more questions.

Matthew 22:41-44

THE BOOK OF PROVERBS

- 5] Every word of God is pure: he is a shield unto them that put their trust in him.
- 6] Add thou not unto his words, lest he reprove thee, and thou be found a liar.
- 7] Two *things* have I required of thee; deny me *them* not before I die:
- 8] Remove far from me vanity and lies: give me neither poverty nor riches; feed me with food convenient for me:

(Sounds like he would avoid being involved with Hollywood...)

- 9] Lest I be full, and deny *thee*, and say, Who *is* the LORD? or lest I be poor, and steal, and take the Name of my God *in vain*.

“Taking the Name of God in vain” has more to do with Ambassadorship than vocabulary!

- 10] Accuse not a servant unto his master, lest he curse thee, and thou be found guilty.
- 11] *There is* a generation *that* curseth their father, and doth not bless their mother.
- 12] *There is* a generation *that are* pure in their own eyes, and *yet* is not washed from their filthiness.
- 13] *There is* a generation, O how lofty are their eyes! and their eyelids are lifted up.
- 14] *There is* a generation, whose teeth *are as* swords, and their jaw teeth *as* knives, to devour the poor from off the earth, and the needy from *among* men.
- 15] The horseleach hath two daughters, *crying*, Give, give. There are three *things that* are never satisfied, *yea*, four *things* say not, *It is* enough:

Leeches graphically depict the attitude of greed, a tenacious insistence on having more of what is desired. The numerical pattern (x and x + 1) is not to give a complete list, but to stress the final (x + 1) item, as the culmination or product of its preceding items.(Job 5:19; Prov 30:15-16, 18-19,21-31).

- 16] The grave; and the barren womb; the earth *that* is not filled with water; and the fire *that* saith not, *It is* enough.

First is “the grave.” You and I live in a funeral procession. All of us do.

- 17] The eye *that* mocketh at *his* father, and despiseth to obey *his* mother, the ravens of the valley shall pick it out, and the young eagles shall eat it.
- 18] There be three *things which* are too wonderful for me, *yea*, four which I know not:
- 19] The way of an eagle in the air; the way of a serpent upon a rock; the way of a ship in the midst of the sea; and the way of a man with a maid.

They each go where there are no paths.

- 20] Such *is* the way of an adulterous woman; she eateth, and wipeth her mouth, and saith, I have done no wickedness.

(A society which celebrates adultery is not innocent...)

- 21] For three *things* the earth is disquieted, and for four *which* it cannot bear:
22] For a servant when he reigneth; and a fool when he is filled with meat;

“The reigning servant” was Jeroboam, a servant, became the first king of the northern kingdom. A “filled” fool is typified by the rich fool our Lord told about who built bigger barns; eating gourmet food, of course.

- 23] For an odious *woman* when she is married; and an handmaid that is heir to her mistress.

An unloved woman brings grief to the marriage; A poor person, walked on, suddenly rich, is often overbearing...

- 24] There be four *things which are* little upon the earth, but they *are* exceeding wise:
25] The ants *are* a people not strong, yet they prepare their meat in the summer;

Prov 6:6-8. Prepare for the coming season. (Also, Heb 9:27.)

- 26] The conies *are but* a feeble folk, yet make they their houses in the rocks;

“Conies” are the *hyrax syriacus*; long hair, a short tail, and round ears; chew the cud. They are “feeble” and defenseless (and “unclean”: Lev 11:5; Higherrock: Ps 61:2).

- 27] The locusts have no king, yet go they forth all of them by bands;

vs. locusts in Rev 9; Amos 7:1(LXX): also, and idiom for demons.

And the fifth angel sounded, and I saw a star fall from heaven unto the earth: and to him was given the key of the bottomless pit. And he opened the bottomless pit; and there arose a smoke out of the pit, as the smoke of a great furnace; and the sun and the air were darkened by reason of the smoke of the pit. And there came out of the smoke locusts upon the earth: and unto them was given power, as the scorpions of the earth have power. And it was commanded them that they should not hurt the grass of the earth, neither any green thing, neither any tree; but only those men which have not the seal of God in their foreheads. And to them it was given that they should not kill them, but that they should be tormented five months: and their torment was as the torment of a scorpion, when he striketh a man. And in those days shall men seek death, and shall not find it; and shall desire to die, and death shall flee from them.

Revelation 9:1-6

And the shapes of the locusts were like unto horses prepared unto battle; and on their heads were as it were crowns like gold, and their faces were as the faces of men. And they had hair as the hair of women, and their teeth were as the teeth of lions. And they had breastplates, as it were breastplates

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of iron; and the sound of their wings was as the sound of chariots of many horses running to battle. And they had tails like unto scorpions, and there were stings in their tails: and their power was to hurt men five months. And they had a king over them, which is the angel of the bottomless pit, whose name in the Hebrew tongue is Abaddon, but in the Greek tongue hath his name Apollyon.

Revelation 9:7-11

Thus hath the Lord GOD shewed unto me; and, behold, he formed grasshoppers in the beginning of the shooting up of the latter growth; and, lo, it was the latter growth after the king's mowings.

Amos 7:1 (MT)

The Lord hath shewn me and behold a swarm of locusts were coming, and behold one of the young devastating locusts was Gog the King.

Amos 7:1 (LXX)

Illuminates “Gog” of Ezekiel 38. (Reprise in Chapter 20:8.)

28] The spider taketh hold with her hands, and is in kings' palaces.

“...spider”: שְׁמָמֶת *shemameth*; a little house lizard. It has fanlike feet which exude a sticky substance so that the lizard can actually hold onto a marble wall or a tessellated ceiling. [Like faith that says, “... I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day” (2 Tim 1:12). “Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ” (Phil 1:6).]

29] There be three *things* which go well, yea, four are comely in going:

30] A lion *which is* strongest among beasts, and turneth not away for any;

A lion is known for its unflinching boldness (vs. pussycat preachers and mealymouthed deacons). Cromwell said, “I have learned that when you fear God you have no man to fear.”

31] A greyhound; an he goat also; and a king, against whom *there is* no rising up.

Greyhound? Strutting rooster? “Lay aside every weight...Run with patience the race that is before us...” Heb 12:1,2 (perhaps an extinct animal, exact meaning unknown).

Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before

SESSION 08: CHAPTER 31 & REVIEW

him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.

Hebrews 12:1,2

Although the fig tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labour of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls: Yet I will rejoice in the LORD, I will joy in the God of my salvation. The LORD God is my strength, and he will make my feet like hinds' feet, and he will make me to walk upon mine high places. To the chiefsinger on my stringed instruments.

Habakkuk 3:17-19

The goat on the high places...

- 32] If thou hast done foolishly in lifting up thyself, or if thou hast thought evil, *lay* thine hand upon thy mouth.
- 33] Surely the churning of milk bringeth forth butter, and the wringing of the nose bringeth forth blood: so the forcing of wrath bringeth forth strife.

Final Session

- Review previous sessions:
 - Wicked women Proverbs 1 – 9
 - Nagging wives Prov 21:9; 25:4
- Tribute to the Godly, dedicated woman: Proverbs 31
- Bring your log book up to date.

Proverbs has much to say about wicked women in Chapters 1–9, and about nagging wives (21:9 and 25:24). The book closes, however, with a glorious tribute to the godly, dedicated woman who brings honor to God and joy to her family.

The Book of Proverbs Session 8 Chapter 31 & Review

Outline of the Book of Proverbs

- Wisdom and Folly Contrasted Prov 1–9
- Proverbs of Solomon Prov 10–24
 - (Written and set in order by himself)*
- Proverbs of Solomon Prov 25–29
 - (Set in order by men of Hezekiah)*
- Oracle of Agur Prov 30
- **Proverbs of Lemuel's Mother** **Prov 31**

Critical Priorities

Your spouse: the second most important decision a Christian will make.

- “A virtuous woman is a crown to her husband” (Prov 12:4).
- “He who finds a wife finds a good thing, and obtains favor from the Lord” (Prov 18:22).
- “A prudent wife is from the Lord” (Prov 19:14).
- Not to be unequally yoked (2 Cor 6:14–18; 1 Cor 7:39).
- A Christian woman who marries an unsaved man may be endangering her life in childbirth (1 Tim 2:12-15).

Proverbs 31

- 1] The words of king Lemuel, the prophecy that his mother taught him.
- 2] What, my son? and what, the son of my womb? and what, the son of my vows?

Lemuel, “devoted to the Lord.” (Bathsheba’s pet name for Solomon?)

There is no record of a king named Lemuel. The most important ministry mothers and fathers have is the spiritual training of their children (Cf. 2 Tim 1:5 and 3:15). Bathsheba is asking, “What can I say to you?” She needed to say something, because she saw some of the characteristics of his father David. She well remembered the sin of David. I don’t think it was her sin; I think it was David’s sin. (Mt 1:6). *Bathsheba’s name is not even mentioned*. I believe God is making it clear that it was David’s sin. She sees the temptation that Solomon faces; so she gives him words of advice.

“The son of my vows” = she had dedicated him to God.

- 3] Give not thy strength unto women, nor thy ways to that which destroyeth kings.

She knew David.

- 4] *It is not for kings, O Lemuel, it is not for kings to drink wine; nor for princes strong drink:*
- 5] *Lest they drink, and forget the law, and pervert the judgment of any of the afflicted.*
- 6] *Give strong drink unto him that is ready to perish, and wine unto those that be of heavy hearts.*
- 7] *Let him drink, and forget his poverty, and remember his misery no more.*

For “medicinal” purposes...

- 8] *Open thy mouth for the dumb in the cause of all such as are appointed to destruction.*

- 9] Open thy mouth, judge righteously, and plead the cause of the poor and needy.
Oh, Solomon, be honest and just and fair!

“Always do right—this will gratify some and astonish the rest.”

Mark Twain

President Harry S. Truman liked that quotation so much he had it framed and placed on the wall behind his desk in the Oval Office.

Now she goes on to tell him how to choose a wife. This is good advice. It is God’s advice.

The Virtuous Woman: “Far Above Rubies”

- 10] Who can find a virtuous woman? for her price *is* far above rubies.
11] The heart of her husband doth safely trust in her, so that he shall have no need of spoil.
12] She will do him good and not evil all the days of her life.

“Virtuous” here means a woman of character, a woman of strength, a woman of real ability. She is not to be a shrinking violet.

“...no need of spoil”: not be a spendthrift with her husband’s money. (Adam was only half a man until God made Eve and gave her to him.)

What kind of love should a man show to his wife? The same kind of love that Christ shows to the church (Eph 5:18ff): sacrificial, patient, suffering, tender, constant. A wife has no problem submitting herself in obedience to a husband who loves her *and shows it*. A happy home does not “just happen”; it is the result of hard work, prayer, and real love.

- 13] She seeketh wool, and flax, and worketh willingly with her hands.

She is a devoted steward, diligent, resourceful, and vigilant. Runs a night shift...

- 14] She is like the merchants’ ships; she bringeth her food from afar.
15] She riseth also while it is yet night, and giveth meat to her household, and a portion to her maidens.

I cannot ever remember my mom being in bed... Proverbs has nothing good to say about laziness, whether it involves a man or a woman. See Prov 6:6-11; 10:4,26; 13:4; 15:19; 18:9; 19:15,24; 20:4,13; 21:25; 22:13; 24:30-34; 26:13-16.

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- 16] She considereth a field, and buyeth it: with the fruit of her hands she planteth a vineyard.
17] She girdeth her loins with strength, and strengtheneth her arms.
18] She perceiveth that her merchandise *is* good: her candle goeth not out by night.
19] She layeth her hands to the spindle, and her hands hold the distaff.
20] She stretcheth out her hand to the poor; yea, she reacheth forth her hands to the needy.

“Man’s work is from sun to sun, but a woman’s work is never done.”
She is devoted and generous...

“...distaff”: a staff holding flax or wool, from which thread is drawn by hand or by spinning wheel. Now, connotatively, the feminine aspects...

- 21] She is not afraid of the snow for her household: for all her household *are* clothed with scarlet.
22] She maketh herself coverings of tapestry; her clothing *is* silk and purple.
23] Her husband is known in the gates, when he sitteth among the elders of the land.
24] She maketh fine linen, and selleth *it*; and delivereth girdles unto the merchant.
25] Strength and honour *are* her clothing; and she shall rejoice in time to come.
26] She openeth her mouth with wisdom; and in her tongue *is* the law of kindness.
27] She looketh well to the ways of her household, and eateth *not* the bread of idleness.
28] Her children arise up, and call her blessed; her husband *also*, and he praiseth her.
29] Many daughters have done virtuously, but thou excellest them all.
30] Favour *is* deceitful, and beauty *is* vain: *but* a woman *that* feareth the LORD, she shall be praised.

The most critical quality of all: fear of the Lord. The most missing quality in the family: gratitude.

- 31] Give her of the fruit of her hands; and let her own works praise her in the gates.

Review: The Book of Proverbs

Wisdom Literature

- Old Testament:
 - Proverbs.
 - Ecclesiastes.
 - Song of Songs.
 - Job.
 - Psalms 19, 37, 104, 107, 147, & 148.
- For more on the nature of wisdom:
 - O.T.: 2 Chronicles 1.
 - N.T.: 1 Corinthians 1; James 3.

The Book of Proverbs

- Proverbs is God's book on "How to wise up and live."
 - Beyond keeping laws.
 - Focuses on leading an aggressively dynamic life.
 - Proper and improper attitudes, conduct, and characteristics are referred to in succinct, penetrating ways.

Divinely Authorized

All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness.

2 Timothy 3:16

Addressees

- The words "my son" were written by Solomon 15 times in Chapters 1-7 and twice elsewhere (Prov 19:27; 27:11).
 - They are used five times in the sayings of the wise men (Prov 23:15, 19; 23:26; 24:13, 21 and once by Lemuel's mother Prov 31:2).
- "My sons" occurs 4 times, all by Solomon (Prov 4:1; 5:7; 7:24; 8:32).

New Testament Quotes

Rom 3:15	Prov 1:16
Heb 12:5-6	Prov 3:11-12
Rev 3:19	Prov 3:11-12
James 4:6	Prov 3:34
1 Peter 5:5	Prov 3:34
Rom 12:20	Prov 25:21-22
2 Peter 2:22	Prov 26:11

Wisdom

- Traditional definition: "The ability to use knowledge in the right way."
- Biblical: There is a "wisdom of this world" (1 Cor 2:1-8; James 3:13-18); Divine wisdom is from above: Jesus Christ is the Wisdom of God (Prov 8:22-31; 1 Cor. 1:24,30; Col. 2:3).

חֵכְמָה **Chokmah, Wisdom**

- It occurs 45 times in Proverbs:
 - Being knowledgeable, experienced, and efficient in their areas of expertise.

- Wisdom in Proverbs includes:
 - practical sagacity, mental acumen, and functional skill, but it also includes moral, upright living which stems from a right relationship to the Lord.
- “The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom” (Proverbs 9:10).
 - makes the Hebrew concept of wisdom unique (Cf. 14:16, 1:7; 15:33; Job 28:28; Ps 111:10).
- To be wise in the Biblical sense one must begin with a proper relationship to God.
- Wisdom is described as:
 - Eternal (Prov 8:22-26).
 - The Creator of all things (Prov 8:27-29).
 - The Beloved of God (Prov 8:30-31).
- To yield your life to Christ and obey Him is true wisdom (John 1:1-2; Col. 1:15-19).

Parallelism of Ideas

Hebrew poetry does not have rhyme or meter as our poetry does. Hebrew poetry consists of a parallelism of ideas. There are three main types:

- Synonymous Parallelism
- Antithetic (Contrast) Parallelism
- Synthetic Parallelism

1. Synonymous Parallelism

The second clause restates what is given in the first clause: “Judgments are prepared for scorners, And stripes for the back of fools.” (Prov 19:29)

It expresses the same thought in a different way. Sometimes every unit in one line is matched in the next line (e.g., Prov 1:2; 2:11). This is called complete synonymous parallelism. Other times only some of the units in one line are matched in the next line (e.g., in Prov 1:9 the words “They will be” are not matched in the second line). This is called incomplete synonymous parallelism.

2. Antithetic (Contrast) Parallelism

A truth, which is stated in the first clause, is made stronger in the second clause by contrast with an opposite truth: “The light of the righteous rejoiceth, But the lamp of the wicked shall be put out.” (Prov 13:9)

You can see that the second statement is stating the same truth but from the opposite point of view by way of contrast. Most of the verses in Chapters 10-15 are antithetical.

3. Synthetic Parallelism

The second clause develops the thought of the first: “The terror of a king is as the roaring of a lion; He that provoketh him to anger sinneth against his own life.” (Prov 20:2)

In *synthetic parallelism* the second line simply **continues the thought** of the first line. Sometimes the second line **gives a result** of the first line (Prov 3:6; 16:3) and other times the second line **describes something** in the first line (Prov 6:12; 15:3).

Sometimes one line gives a preference over what is referred to in the other line. There are 19 such “better . . . than” verses (Prov 12:9; 15:16-17; 16:8, 16, 19, 32; 17:1, 12; 19:1, 22; 21:9, 19; 22:1; 25:7, 24; 27:5, 10; 28:6). “How much worse” or “how much more” is another kind of synthetic parallelism (Prov 11:31; 15:11; 17:7; 19:7, 10; 21:27). Most of the verses in Prov 16:1-22:16 have either synonymous or synthetic parallelism.

Three Losers

- Three classes of people who desperately need wisdom (Prov 1:22):
 - The Scorer.
 - The Fool.
 - The Simple.

The Scorners

- Scorners mock at God’s wisdom because it is too high for them (Prov 14:6), but they will not admit it because they “know everything” (Prov 21:24).
- The Hebrew word for “scorner” literally means “to make a mouth”; and we can easily picture them sneering and curling up their lips in scorn.
- They never profit from rebuke (Prov 9:7-8; 13:1) and, as a result, they will one day be judged (Prov 19:29).

The Fool

- The person who is dense, sluggish, careless, and self-satisfied: *Nabal* (“fool”) is a good example (1 Sam 25).

- The Fool:
 - hates instruction Prov 1:7,22
 - is self-confident Prov 12:15
 - talks without thinking Prov 29:11
 - mocks at sin Prov 14:9

The Simple

- The Simple are those who believe everything and everybody and lack discernment (Prov 14:15).
- They are easily led astray by others and lack understanding (Prov 7:7).
- They cannot see ahead and, as a result, repeatedly walk into trouble (Prov 22:3).

The Wise

- Listen to instruction Prov 1:5
- Obey what they hear Prov 10:8
- Store up what they learn Prov 10:14
- Win others to the Lord Prov 11:30
- Flee from sin Prov 14:16
- Watch their tongue Prov 16:23
- Are diligent in their daily work Prov 10:5

Wisdom & Folly

- Consider Wisdom and Folly, the two “women” who are out to woo and win the hearts of people. (The Hebrew word for wisdom is in the feminine gender.) Three calls from “Wisdom” and three from “Folly”—Wisdom calls us to God and life; Folly calls us to sin and judgment.
- **Wisdom’s 1st Call: Salvation (Prov 1:20-33)**
 - was to the Scorned, the Fool, and the Simple.
- **Wisdom’s 2nd Call: Wealth (Prov 8)**
 - was only to the Fool and the Simple.
- **Wisdom’s 3rd Call: Life (Prov 9)**
 - is only to the Simple.
- **Folly’s 1st call: to Condemnation (Prov 5)**
- **Folly’s 2nd call: to Poverty (Prov 6)**
- **Folly’s 3rd call: to Death (Prov 7)**

The Results

- **The Scornor**
 - rejected Wisdom and met destruction (Prov 1:24-27).
 - listened to Folly and received destruction (Prov 6:32).
- **The Fool**
 - rejected Wisdom and was led to death (Prov 8:36).
 - he listened to Folly and received death (Prov 5:22,23).
- **The Simple**
 - rejected Wisdom and went to hell (Prov 9:18).
 - he listened to Folly and ended up in hell (Prov 7:27).

Summary

- ***We cannot avoid decisions.***
 - “Decision determines destiny.”
 - We choose either the path of Wisdom or the path of Folly; we cannot postpone this decision or avoid it.
 - To choose one is to reject the other; to reject one is to choose the other.
 - What decision have *you* made?
- ***Sin is always alluring.***
 - Folly does everything she can to make sin attractive.
 - She never reveals her true nature; she never tells people that her house is the way to hell
 - The only way to detect Folly is to walk with Wisdom (Prov 2:10-22).
 - Those who walk with Wisdom, obeying the Word of God, will not easily be tricked by Folly.
- ***It takes time for judgment to fall.***
 - The simple, the fool, and the scornor all thought they “had it made” when they rejected Wisdom, because nothing disastrous immediately happened.
 - But judgment eventually caught up with them. “Whatever a man sows, that he will also reap” (Gal 6:7).
- ***Satan appeals to the flesh***
 - The “wicked woman” (or “strange woman”) is appealing to the young man’s appetites. She tells him he can use his body as he pleases and not suffer for it.
 - Sexual sin leads to tragic results, both in body and soul.

- **God continues to call**
 - So long as people will hear, God’s Spirit continues to call. But when sinners refuse to obey, their ears become deaf to the Word of God. Beware!
 - “Today, if you will hear His voice, do not harden your hearts” (Heb 3:7ff).

Sexual Sin Will Disappoint: Proverbs 5

- The experience goes:
 - from sweetness to bitterness (Prov 5:1-6). The wise person checks on the destination before buying a ticket (Prov 4:26), but modern society thinks that people can violate God’s laws and escape the consequences.
 - from gain to loss (Prov 5:7-14). Temptation always includes hopeful promises; otherwise, people wouldn’t take the devil’s bait. *Sin is the most expensive thing in the world.*
 - from purity to pollution (Prov 5:15-20). Sex within marriage is a beautiful river that brings life and refreshment, but sex outside marriage is a sewer that defiles everything it touches. When a husband and wife obey Scriptures like 1 Corinthians 7:1–5 and Ephesians 5:22-33, neither of them will look for satisfaction anywhere else.
 - from freedom to bondage (Prov 5:21-23). The kind of bondage which can’t easily be broken (Jn 8:34; Rom 6:16).

Sexual Sin Results in Losses: Proverbs 6

- | | |
|------------------------------|--------------|
| • They lose the Word of God | Prov 6:20-24 |
| • They lose wealth | Prov 6:25-26 |
| • They lose enjoyment | Prov 6:27-31 |
| • They lose their good sense | Prov 6:32 |
| • They lose their peace | Prov 6:33-35 |

God’s Hate List

- **A proud look** (“Eyes of loftiness”): #1 on His list: He puts it ahead of murder and ahead of drunkenness! Origin of pride: Satan...
- **A lying tongue**: There is far more said throughout the Bible about the abuse of the tongue than is said about the abuse of alcohol! The abuse of the tongue is something that is common to all races and all languages.

- **Hands that shed innocent blood:** God says the murderer should be punished because he took that which God said is sacred—the human life. The popular idea today is completely opposite. After a man has been killed the murderer is brought to trial, then suddenly *the murderer's life* is considered to be precious. God says that human life is precious and that when a murderer kills a man, he is to forfeit his own life. Capital punishment is the teaching of the Word of God.
- **A heart that devises wicked imaginations:** By the way, have you ever confessed to God what you have in your mind and in your heart? We all need to do that. We need to be cleansed.
- **Feet swiftly running to mischief:** God is dealing with the anatomy of evil and iniquity. It includes the eyes, the tongues, the hands, the heart, and the feet. Isaiah put it like this: “Their feet run to evil, and they make haste to shed innocent blood: their thoughts are thoughts of iniquity; wasting and destruction are in their paths” (Isa 59:7).
- **A false witness that speaketh lies:** “Deliver my soul, O Lord, from lying lips, and from a deceitful tongue” (Ps 120:2).
- **He that sows discord among brethren:** “Only by pride cometh contention: but with the well advised *is* wisdom.” (Prov 13:10).

The Path to Destruction: Proverbs 7

- **He tempts himself** (Prov 7:6-9): This young man is either terribly dumb or very proud, convinced that he can play with sin and get away with it. But he's only tempting himself and heading for trouble. To begin with, he's out at night (“walking in darkness”—see 2:13; John 3:19–21; 1 John 1:5–7), and he's deliberately walking near the place of temptation and danger.
- **He is tempted by the woman** (Prov 7:10-20): She would prepare him a feast that he would never forget. She assures him that nobody will find out about it (except that somebody *is* watching...!)
- **He tempts the Lord** (Prov 7:21–27): We tempt God when we deliberately disobey Him and put ourselves into situations so difficult that only God can deliver us.

Society today not only smiles at sexual sin, it actually approves it and encourages it. Our entertainment industry celebrates it, promotes it, and exports it throughout the world.

Gossip

- Gossip is a form of betrayal!
- Gossip is probably accountable for more personal pain and suffering than most of us have any appreciation of.
- Common, casual, yet hurtful beyond our imagining.
- Quietly, behind the flurry of daily priorities, its venom does its silent work, undermining confidences, betraying relationships, spreading unseen injustices...
- It is disturbing to note how many of us have been injured—deeply—by gossip and by those who accept, without checking, negative or derogatory innuendos whispered behind our backs.
- What an opportunity! To display loyalty, love, and, by assuming the most charitable construction, *in advance*, demonstrate the foundation of a relationship!

The Godly Tongue

This demands a godly heart, because the tongue only speaks what the heart treasures.

- When used for good, the tongue is like:
 - valuable silver (Prov 10:20).
 - a beautiful and fruitful tree of life (Prov 15:4; cf. 12:14; 18:20).
 - a refreshing well of water (Prov 18:4; 10:11).
 - a healthy dose of medicine (Prov 12:18).
- The tongue should be used for right purposes:
 - bringing peace (Prov 15:1, 26).
 - giving wise reproof to the erring (Prov 25:12; 28:23).
 - delivering lost souls from death (Prov 1:9; 14:3-5, 25; 12:6).
 - teaching people the things of the Lord (Prov 15:7; 16:21, 23; 20:15).
 - carrying the good news of the Gospel (Prov 25:25).

The Tongue

- | | |
|--------------------|--------------------|
| • Talebearing | Prov 18:8 |
| • Lying | Prov 12:17-22 |
| • Talking Too Much | Prov 12:13; 18:6-7 |
| • Talking Too Soon | Prov 18:13, 17 |
| • Flattering | Prov 26:28 |
| • Quarreling | Prov 12:16, 18 |
| • Talebearing | Prov 18:8 |

Moses warned about this sin (Lev 19:16; Cf. 11:13). “Love covers all sins” (10:12; Cf. 17:9 1 Pet 4:8; James 5:20). Management by hearsay? (Mt 18:15–18). Stay away from the talebearer (Prov 20:19). They are a kindler of fires (Prov 26:20) and a destroyer of friendships (Prov 17:9).

Talebearing: Proverbs 18:8

- Words can be as deadly as weapons: Solomon compares deceitful words to three different weapons (Prov 25:18):
 - A maul (battle-ax) that crushes at close range.
 - A sword that cuts.
 - An arrow that pierces and can be shot from a distance.

Lying : Proverbs 12:17-22

- God hates a lying tongue (Prov 6:16-17).
- A lying tongue is only covering up sin in the heart (Prov 10:18).
 - It is deceit in the heart that makes a statement a lie (Prov 12:20).
 - The Bible tests and reveals the intents of the heart (Heb 4:12).
- Lies are like cutting swords, but the truth is like a healing medicine (Prov 12:18)
- The truth is eternal, but lies will be revealed and the liars judged (Prov 12:19; Cf. Ps. 52:4,5). Examples: Ananias and Sapphira (Acts 5) and Judas (John 12:1-8).
- The truth will deliver souls, but lies only lead to bondage and shame (Prov 14:25).
- Liars enjoy listening to liars (Prov 17:4).
 - The heart controls the ear as well as the lips.
- But all liars will be punished (Prov 19:5,9) and when they “eat their own words,” it will be like gravel (Prov 20:17).
- Hell is waiting for the one who “loves and practices a lie” (Rev 22:15).

Talking Too Much: Proverbs 12:13; 18:6-7

- The fool talks too much and talks his way right into trouble: His mouth becomes a trap, and he himself is snared by it (Prov 6:1-5).
 - “In the multitude of words sin is not lacking” (Prov 10:19).
 - A loose tongue = poverty and foolishness (Prov 14:23); many people would rather talk than work (Prov 15:2).
 - A controlled tongue means a safe life (Prov 13:3).
 - The person of few words is regarded as a person of knowledge (Prov 17:27,28).

Unfortunately, there is sometimes a “multitude of words” even in God’s house, and Ecc 5:1-7 has some good counsel about this.

Talking Too Soon: Proverbs 18:13, 17

- “Let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak” (James 1:19).
- “Restrain the lips” until you really have something to say (Prov 10:19).
- A godly person will study to answer, but a fool will open his mouth and pour out foolishness (Prov 15:28).
- Pray: “Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth; keep the door of my lips” (Ps 141:3; Cf. Ps 39:1).

Too often we are slow to hear—we never really listen to the whole matter patiently—and swift to speak; and this gets us into trouble.

- God wants us to search out each matter carefully and then give fair judgment (Prov 25:2). We are not to agree with the “first cause” that we hear but to seek to understand both sides of a matter (Prov 18:17).
- Potiphar did not listen to Joseph’s side of the story and committed a great crime because of it (Gen 39:19).
- David jumped to conclusions about innocent Mephibosheth (2 Sam 16:1-4; 19:24-30).

Even where dedicated Christians are involved, there are two sides to a story. This is not because people necessarily lie, but simply because no two people see and hear the same matter in the same way.

Flattery: Proverbs 26:28

- Flattery is insincere praise given by one who has selfish motives.
 - Flattery is a dangerous net spread before an innocent man’s feet (Prov 29:5).
 - “A flattering mouth works ruin” (Prov 26:28).
 - The flatterer’s mouth is an open sepulchre (Ps 5:9).
- We are warned not to meddle with people given to flattery (Prov 20:19).

Flattery a form of lying, but it is so dangerous that it deserves separate attention.

- Satan used a form of flattery to tempt Eve: “You will be like God” (Gen 3:5).
- The evil woman uses flattery to tempt the young man (Prov 5:3; 7:5,21).

- “The rich has many friends” mainly because they want to flatter him and get something out of him (Prov 14:20; 19:4,6).
- Honest rebuke is better than flattery (Prov 28:23). “Faithful are the wounds of a friend, but the kisses of an enemy (like Judas) are deceitful” (Prov 27:6).
- Honest praise in the Christian life (1 Thess 5:12,13) is like a refiner’s furnace (Prov 27:21): some Christians are so carnal they cannot take praise; it goes to their heads; or, it can reveal envy: they cannot stand to see another praised.

It brings to the top either the pure gold or the dross. When the Jews praised David for his victories, it made David humble, but it revealed the envy in Saul’s heart (1 Sam 18).

Quarreling: Proverbs 12:16, 18

- Anger:
 - There is a righteous anger (Eph 4:26).
 - Unrighteous anger, displays of temper (Prov 29:22).
- An angry person keeps adding fuel to the fire (Prov 26:21).
- The best way to stop an argument is with soft words (Prov 15:1-2).
 - This is the best way to “break the bones” (Prov 25:15).
- Being able to control one’s temper is the same as ruling an army or an empire (Prov 16:32; Cf. 14:17,29; 17:14).

[Wiersbe, W. W. 1993. *Wiersbe’s Expository Outlines on the Old Testament*, Victor Books, Wheaton, IL.]

Right Use of Words

- Words that help and encourage:
 - Prov 10:11,20,21; 12:14,18; 15:4; 18:4,20,21.
- Words that express wisdom:
 - Prov 10:13,31; 14:3; 15:2,7; 16:10,21,23; 20:15.
- Words that are few:
 - Prov 10:19,11:12,13:3,17:27.
- Words that are fitting (kind, pleasant, appropriate):
 - Prov 10:32; 12:25; 15:1,4,23; 16:24; 25:11,15.
- Words that are true:
 - Prov 12:17,19,22; 14:5,25.
- Words that are carefully chosen:
 - Prov 13:3,15:28; 16:23; 21:23.

Wrong Use of Words

- Lying:
– Prov 6:16,17; 10:18; 12:19,22; 17:4,7; 19:5,22; 21:6; 26:28.
- Slandering:
– Prov 10:18; 30:10.
- Gossiping:
– Prov 11:13; 16:28; 17:9; 18:8; 20:19; 26:20,22.
- Constant Talking:
– Prov 10:8,10,19; 17:28; 18:2; 10:19.
- False Witnessing:
– Prov 12:17; 14:5,35; 19:5,28; 21:28; 25:18.
- Mocking:
– Prov 12:1; 14:6; 15:12; 17:5; 19:29; 21:11; 22:10; 24:9; 30:17.
- Harsh Talking (perverse, evil, sly words):
– Prov 10:31,32; 12:18; 13:3; 14:3; 15:1,28; 17:4; 19:1,28.
- Boasting:
– Prov 17:17; 20:14; 25:14; 27:1,2.
- Quarreling:
– Prov 13:10; 15:18; 17:14,19; 19:13; 20:3; 21:9,19; 22:10; 25:24; 19:17,20,21; 27:15.
- Deceiving:
– Prov 7:19,20; 12:2; 15:4; 25:23.
- Flattering:
– Prov 26:28; 28:23; 29:5.
- Ignorant or Foolish Words:
– Prov 14:7; 15:2,7-14; 18:6,7.

Hebrew Hermeneutics

- **Peshat**: the literal, direct meaning.
- **Remez**: an allegorical significance; a hint of something deeper.
- **Derash**: the homiletical, or practical application.
- **Sod**: the mystical or hidden meaning.

This paradigm emerged before the 12th century (Moses de Leon), and the rabbis use the mnemonic, *PaRDeS* (The Garden, or Paradise), to remember them. The first three have their parallels in traditional Christian hermeneutics (yet we would probably order them with *Remez* as third, and *Derash* as second, but that would spoil their mnemonic).

The words of Agur the son of Jakeh, even the prophecy: the man spake unto Ithiel, even unto Ithiel and Ucal,

Proverbs 30:1

אגור Agur

- From *agar*, “to collect.”
 - “The collector,” possibly a symbolical name (cf. Ecclesiastes, “the preacher” : the *Koheleth*)
 - May symbolize Solomon (*Rashi* and *Jerome*).
- Solomon had several names:
 - Jedidiah, “beloved by Jehovah,” the name which, by Nathan, the Lord gave to Solomon at birth (2 Sam 12:25).
 - (possibly) Lemuel, “devoted to God.”
- He was the son of Jakeh, a mysterious collector of wise sayings and, ostensibly, inspired counsels to Ithiel and Ucal.

The proverbs of Solomon the son of David, king of Israel; To know wisdom and instruction; to perceive the words of understanding; To receive the instruction of wisdom, justice, and judgment, 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.

Proverbs 1:1-6

“Dark sayings” חִידָה *chiydah*: Riddle, parable, enigma (to be guessed), enigmatic or perplexing saying or question, dark obscure utterance.

I will open my mouth in a parable: I will utter dark sayings of old: Which we have heard and known, and our fathers have told us.

Psalms 78:2,3

בן־יָקֵחַ Son of Jakeh

- Jakeh, from *yaqeh*: “carefully religious,” “obedient,” or “pious.”
- Agur was the son of Jakeh, a mysterious collector of wise sayings and, ostensibly, inspired counsels to Ithiel and Ucal.
- The father of Agur would thus be David.

הַמָּשָׁא הַנָּבִיא “Even the prophecy the man spake”(?)

This is an imputed translation from difficult Hebrew:

- | | | |
|-------------|------------------|----------------------|
| • הַמָּשָׁא | <i>ha massa</i> | the burden, prophecy |
| • נָאֵם | <i>ne'um</i> | oracle |
| • הַנָּבִיא | <i>ha-gebber</i> | the mighty |

“the mighty oracle prophesied...”

יִחִיֵּאל Ithiel

- “God comes, arrives, is with me;” equivalent to Immanuel, “God with us” (Isaiah 7:14; 8:8).

אֵכָל Ucal

- a verb: ‘*ukhal*, to be consumed. “God arrives to be consumed” (?)

“The words gathered of the wise son of the pious father, the prophecy of the mighty oracle: that El (God) arrives to be consumed.”

I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world. The Jews therefore strove among themselves, saying, How can this man give us his flesh to eat? Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him. As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father: so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me. This is that bread which came down from heaven: not as your fathers did eat manna, and are dead: he that eateth of this bread shall live for ever.

John 6:51-58

*Surely I am more brutish than any man, And have not the understanding of a man. I neither learned wisdom, **nor** have the knowledge of the holy.*

Proverbs 30:2,3

No negative in the Hebrew: It should read “I was not taught wisdom, and I have knowledge of the Holies.”

Who hath ascended up into heaven, or descended? Who hath gathered the wind in his fists? Who hath bound the waters in a garment? Who hath established all the ends of the earth? What is his name, and what is his son's name, if thou canst tell?

Proverbs 30:4

While the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them, Saying, What think ye of Christ? Whose son is he? They say unto him, The Son of David. He saith unto them, How then doth David in spirit call him Lord, saying, [quoting Psalm 110:1] The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool? If David then call him Lord, how is he his son? And no man was able to answer him a word, neither durst any man from that day forth ask him any more questions.

Matthew 22:41-44

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