



Biblical Literacy

Scripture • Substance • Spiritual Passion

Lesson 41.1

Old Testament Survey: Proverbs

Outline for Class

- Welcome
- Theme Today:
Among God's communications in Scripture is the book of Proverbs. This is a book where we read principles of behavior and instructions for wise living. These are concepts that understandably a communicating God would want to give to his people. They are also concepts that are applicable, and to some extent evidenced, by the lives of all peoples, whether Godly or not. There is a reason that the book of Proverbs has always been associated with wisdom for living.

- Prayer for Wisdom
- Video (36 minutes)
- Discussion & Points for Home

Points for Home

- ❖ The English word "proverb" means "a short pithy saying in common and recognized use" according to The Oxford English Dictionary. If we were reading the Hebrew Book of Proverbs, then the title would call the substance of the book Mishle, which indicates a saying of wisdom with a basic sense of poetic balancing of similarity between thoughts.

In translating the book into Greek, the Septuagint writers titled the book Paroimiai Salomontos, or the "Parables [or Proverbs] of Solomon." The Latin version, the Vulgate, titled the book Liber Proverbiorum, or Book of Proverbs. In the Hebrew, the reference is most accurate for Proverbs. The book has plenty of "short pithy statements," but it has more than just that! There are also a number of exhortations in address form that are basically teaching poems to help one live a life of wisdom. Because the proverb is an art form in the Hebrew, we should remember the basics of Hebrew poetry set out in the Psalms lesson. That parallelism is followed in the book of Proverbs.

- ❖ "Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths!"
Enough said...nothing else needs to be added to this point for home.
- ❖ A good name is more desirable than great riches; to be esteemed is better than silver or gold (Prov. 22:1).
This one is worth solemn consideration for a moment. It is also worth honest evaluation. What would we choose, a good name, a trustworthy reputation, or lots of money? Do our actions convey our belief in the wisdom of this proverb?
- ❖ "Incline your ears and hear...that your trust may be in the LORD" (Prov. 22:17, 19).
It is always a good reminder that our lives are built around God. Any other center or driving force behind life is a waste. Even the accumulation of true wisdom is directed around moving one to greater dependence and trust upon God. Let us commit ourselves to seeking him 24/7, micro- and macro-, i.e., at all times and in all things!

Discussion Questions:

- ◆ How has this exploration of Proverbs changed the way you read them?
- ◆ How will this study of Proverbs change the way you understand and apply them?

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