

THE WISDOM OF SOLOMON

PART 1: AN OVERVIEW OF PROVERBS

Introduction:

1. Solomon was blessed by God with great wisdom.
2. His first courtship and marriage – poetically described in the Song of Solomon – was a demonstration of that wisdom.
3. The early decisions of Solomon as King also displayed wisdom and a desire to serve God by obeying His commandments.
4. Furthermore, Solomon recorded much of his wisdom in writing the book of Proverbs.

I. An Introduction to Wisdom Literature

- A. There are five books of the Old Testament that are categorized as Poetry:
 1. Job – *the problem of suffering*
 2. Psalms – *the nature of worship*
 3. Proverbs – *the need of true wisdom for life's troubles and temptations*
 4. Ecclesiastes – *the meaning of life and vanity of life without God*
 5. Song of Solomon – *the power of love*
- B. Of these books, Job, Proverbs, and Ecclesiastes are classified as Wisdom Literature. {*There are several Psalms that also fall into this category.*}
- C. Wisdom Literature contrasts the value of wisdom with the folly of foolishness.
 1. It defines true wisdom.
 2. It points man toward God and His true wisdom.
 3. It explores difficult questions common to man.
 4. It states broad truths in understandable and easy-to-remember form.
 5. It encourages righteous living.
- D. It tends to deal with deep questions and puzzling matters – “dark sayings (Psalm 49:4; 78:2; Proverbs 1:6).”
- E. Yet, it also focuses on practical application for everyday life.

II. An Introduction to the Book of Proverbs

- A. The book of Proverbs does not contain all the proverbs that are recorded in the Bible (cf. 1 Samuel 10:11-12; 24:13-14; Jeremiah 31:29-30; Luke 4:23).
- B. This book is a record of many proverbs, mostly by Solomon.
- C. The Hebrew word translated ‘proverb’ means, “To be like, a comparison; noting likeness in things unlike.”
 1. A proverb is a statement of a general principle of truth, usually without many details.
 2. Thus, proverbs state general rules to which there are exceptions (cf. Proverbs 26:4-5).
 3. Some proverbs are stated in the form of metaphors (cf. Proverbs 1:17).
 4. Most proverbs in the book of Proverbs are didactical – meaning, they are instructive in morality, behavior, and religion.
- D. The theme of the book of Proverbs is wisdom.
 1. A proper knowledge of God (cf. 3:6)
 2. A proper respect of parents (cf. 1:8)
 3. A proper understanding of the world (1:10)

Proverbs 1:1-6

- III. An Overview of Wisdom (Proverbs 1:1-6)
 - A. Six Hebrew words for wisdom
 1. HOKMA – most common – a pattern of thinking; technical skill (cf. Exo.31:1-11)
 2. BINA – a choice that distinguishes between good and bad; the power of judgment that results from understanding
 3. LEB – related to the “heart” – perception and awareness to avoid evil
 4. ORMAH – prudent decision-making
 5. SAKAL – intelligence with ability to make clear decisions (knowledge of the reasons)
 6. TUSHIYYAH – practical success from making good choices
 - B. The purpose of the book of Proverbs...