

## Proverbs: *Words for the Wise*

### Introduction

The Hebrew title is “The Proverbs of Solomon, the Son of David, King of Israel.” The Greek *Septuagint* used the title “Proverbs of Solomon.” The Latin *Vulgate* simply named it “The Book of Proverbs.”

**I. The Author**—Proverbs is a collection of wise sayings from several different persons: **Solomon** (10:1—22:16; and probably 1—9. Proverbs contains about 800 of Solomon’s 3,000 proverbs (1 Kings 4:32). **Wise Sages** (22:17—24:34). **Solomon’s proverbs collected and compiled by Hezekiah’s men** (25—29). **Agur** (30) [Ithiel and Ucal may have been Agur’s sons who first received divine wisdom through him]. **Lemuel** (31) [Some identify Lemuel with Solomon by saying this was his pen name, but there is no evidence for this connection.

**II. The Audience**—Israel’s educable youth (but it applies to all).

**III. The Aim**—To help the young and simple acquire the mental and moral insight to live wisely before God in every area of life. Wisdom is viewing life and self from God’s perspective.

### IV. The Arrangement

<b>The Book of Proverbs</b>														
Focus	Prologue				Proverbs				Precepts					
Divisions	Judgment on Judah		Judgment on Judah's Neighbors		Judgment on All the Earth		Historical Interlude		Deliverance of God's People		Deliverance for God's People		Future of God's Delivered People	
	1	1	2	9	10	21	22	24	25	29	30	30	31	31
Topics	Person of Wisdom				Principles of Wisdom				Practice of Wisdom					
	Solomon				Agur & Lemuel									
Place	Judah				Unknown									
Time	C. 950-700 B.C.													
Author	King Solomon, Agur & Lemuel													

- I. Introduction (1:1-7)
- II. A Father's Admonition to Acquire Wisdom (1:8—9:18)
- III. Proverbs of Solomon (10:1—22:16)
- IV. Sayings of the Wise (22:17—24:34)
- V. Proverbs of Solomon Collected by Hezekiah (25:1—29:27)
- VI. Wisdom of Agur (30)
- VII. Words of Lemuel (31:1-9)
- VIII. Worthy Wife (31:19-31)

## **V. The Analysis**

“Proverb” translates the Hebrew word *masal* which probably comes from a verb that means “to be like, to be compared with.” A proverb is a pithy maxim that makes a comparison or summarizes some common life experience. Proverbs primarily consists of single verse maxims but does contain a few more extended discourses (6:12-14, 16-19; 7:6-23; 30:11-14, 18-19, 21-23; 31:4-5). As with all Hebrew poetic discourse, Proverbs make frequent use of various forms of parallelism, especially antithetical parallelism.

*hokma* “wisdom” 45x in Proverbs Skilled in godly living—navigating through life in a God-honoring way

*Marriage and Family*

*Money*

*Work*

*Tongue*

*Friendship*

## **VI. The Application**

- Fear God (“fear of the Lord”—11x in Proverbs)
- Watch your heart
- Measure your words
- Take family life seriously
- Work hard
- Be a good friend

## **VII. The Assignment**