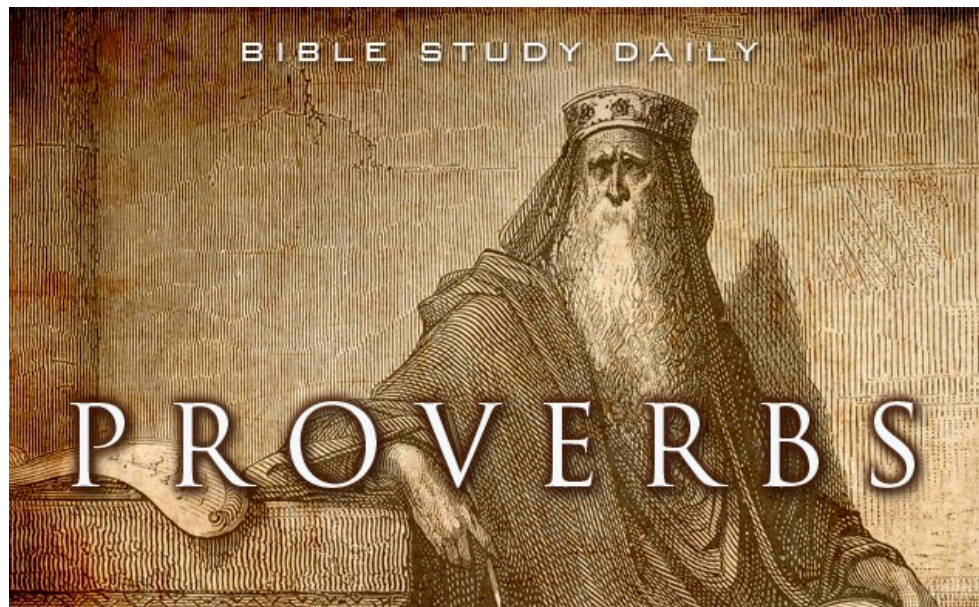




# BIBLE STUDY DAILY



This document contains the introduction to the book of Proverbs as well as my study notes for the book.

## Name

The title “Proverbs” comes from the form of Hebrew poetry contained in the book. The Hebrew word *mashal* translated “Proverbs” means “to be like.”

## Author

The primary author of the book of Proverbs was Solomon, but several other men inspired by God contributed proverbs to the book.

## Genre

Poetry

## Literary Form

Wisdom Literature

## Time Frame

Dating the book of Proverbs with precision is difficult due to the number of contributing authors. However, Proverbs likely began during the time of Solomon 950 B.C. and was completed by the time of the Babylonian captivity 587-539 B.C.


## Emphasis

The emphasis of Proverbs is upon teaching wisdom, discipline, and understanding (Proverbs:1:2). These three combined are the result of obtaining Godly wisdom. There is a close connection between the wise man who fears God and the blessings of God. In the first seven verses (Proverbs 1:1-7) Solomon uses seven different Hebrew words to express a unique aspect of Godly wisdom:

- wisdom (*chokmah*, v. 2)
- instruction (*musar*, v. 2)
- understanding (*biyn*, v. 2)
- wisdom (*sakal*, v. 3)
- subtlety (*ormah*, v. 4)
- discretion (*mezimma*, v. 4)
- knowledge (*da'ath*, v. 7; also used in v. 4)

## Outline

- Proverbs of Solomon on Wisdom and Folly (1:1-9:18)
- Proverbs of Solomon on Morality (10:1 – 22:16)
- Proverbs of the Wise Men (22:17-24:34)

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- Proverbs compiled by Hezekiah's Men (25:1-29:27)
  - Proverbs of Agur (30:1-33 )
  - Proverbs of King Lemuel's Mother (31:1-9)
  - Proverbs about an Ideal Wife and Mother (31:10-31)

# What I Noticed Today (Proverbs 1-3)

## Proverbs 1

In Proverbs 1 Solomon introduces the purposes of the proverbs. Then he warns his son not to be enticed by sinners but to listen to the call of wisdom.

In verses 1-7 Solomon describes the purpose of the proverbs is to attain wisdom, discipline, and understanding. Solomon says a disciplined, prudent life is one in which the person does what is right, just, and fair. Both the simple (young) and the wise can benefit. Fear of the Lord, says Solomon, is the beginning of wisdom.

In verses 8-9 Solomon instructs his son not to forsake his mother's teaching. The word for "teaching" is the Hebrew word *tôrâh* which is usually translated "law." In Jewish homes, parents taught their children God's Laws.

In verses 10-19 Solomon warns his son about those who would entice him to sin. He specifically warns against those who would spill innocent blood and steal from others. Eventually, these men got caught in their own traps. Greedy men lose their lives.

In verses 20-33 Solomon says wisdom cries out to everyone but the simple, the scoffers, and the fools reject wisdom. Those who reject wisdom will face calamity and distress. They have chosen to reject God and His counsel so they will reap what they have sown but whoever listens to wisdom will dwell securely.

## Proverbs 2

In Proverbs 2 Solomon again addresses his son instructing him to expend the effort needed to attain wisdom.


In verses 1-6 Solomon says it takes effort to become wise. One must seek it out, receive the instruction, treasure it, be attentive to it, and store it up in your heart.

In verses 7- 10 by actively seeking wisdom you can find the knowledge of God; you will understand righteousness, equity, justice, and every good path.

In verses 11-22 Solomon says wisdom will be in your heart, discretion will watch over you, and understanding will guard you and deliver you from the paths of the unrighteous. Wisdom will also deliver you from forbidden women, and the adulteress who forsakes her husband. A person with wisdom will walk in the way of the righteous but the wicked will be cut-off.

## Proverbs 3

In Proverbs 3 Solomon exhorts his son not to forget his teaching, and to trust



in the Lord because the one who finds wisdom is blessed.

In verses 1-4 Solomon exhorts his son not to forget his teaching and to remember what has been taught. Solomon says steadfast love and faithfulness should be written on your heart.

In verses 5-8 Solomon tells his son to trust in the Lord, and not rely on his own understanding. Acknowledge God and He will make your paths straight. Fear the Lord and turn away from evil.

In verses 9-10 Solomon tells his son to honor with his wealth, his first fruits, and he will prosper.

In verses 11-12 Solomon tells his son not to despise the Lord's discipline because God disciplines those whom He loves.

In verses 13-20 Solomon describes wisdom as bringing blessings and the gain from wisdom is more precious than gold. Wisdom brings long life, pleasantness, and peace. The Lord used His wisdom, understanding, and knowledge when He created the world.

In verses 21-26 Solomon exhorts his son once again not to forget wisdom and discretion as they will bring life, safety, sleep, and confidence.

In verses 27-35 Solomon gives his son five instructions about relationships with others: do not withhold good from those who deserve it, do not delay paying your debts, do not do harm to a neighbor, do not argue for no reason, and do not envy men of violence. Men who do these things are devious. The Lord curses the wicked and fools will be disgraced.

# What I Noticed Today (Proverbs 4-7)

## Proverbs 4

Proverbs 4 is an exhortation to his son to remember the wisdom that he has been taught because wisdom brings life, protection, and honor.

In verses 1-9 Solomon exhorts his son to listen and remember what he has been taught (again the word 'teaching' is the Hebrew word for the Law of God). Solomon uses himself as an example of how his parents taught him and now he is teaching his son. Nothing in life is more important than getting wisdom and insight.

In verses 10-19 Solomon describes the ways of wisdom (vv. 10-13) contrasted with the ways of wickedness (vv. 14-17). He urges his son to listen to his words of wisdom and follow his upright example. Hang on to the path of righteousness and do not walk in the ways of the wicked. The path of the righteous is bright like the dawning sun but the path of the wicked is darkness.

In verses 20-27 Solomon exhorts his son to pay attention to his words and keep them in his heart. In contrast, he is to avoid crooked speech and devious talk. Stay on the straight path and avoid turning toward evil.

## Proverbs 5

Proverbs 5 becomes more specific as Solomon exhorts his son to avoid adultery and cherish the marriage relationship.

In verses 1-6 Solomon exhorts his son to listen and pay attention as he warns his son of the dangers adultery; it may seem sweet but adultery leads to death.


In verses 7-14 Solomon exhorts his son to listen and stay away from the adulteress. Failure to stay away may result in the loss of strength, long life, money, and health. Succumbing to the adulteress leads to ruin and disgrace.

In verses 15-23 Solomon speaks of the rewards of staying true to your wife. A man should be captivated by his wife with sexual desires constrained to the marriage. God sees what we do, we cannot escape His scrutiny.

## Proverbs 6

In Proverbs 6 Solomon warns his son about the dangers of foolish financial arrangements and laziness.

In verses 1-5 Solomon warns his son against cosigning to borrow money at high interest and to free himself from such obligations as quickly as possible. Such agreements, said Solomon, were like snares that trap a person.



In verses 6-11 Solomon refers to the sluggard as a lazy person, suggesting that the sluggard should look at the ant who is always working and providing for the future even though they have no leader. Solomon warns that a little laziness may not seem bad at first but poverty is the end result.

In verses 12-15 Solomon describes a wicked man who is deceptive, who devises evil and sows discord, but suddenly calamity will strike them.

In verses 16-19 Solomon describes the behaviors of a wicked person that the Lord hates: a person with haughty eyes, a lying tongue, murderers, those that plot evil, those that move quickly to sin, and someone who lies in court.

**Note:** Take note of the various parts of the body involved: heart, mouth, lips, eyes, feet, hands, and tongue.

## Proverbs 7

Proverbs 7 is a continuation of Solomon's instructions regarding the perils of adultery.

In verses 1-5 Solomon begins with his exhortation for his son to listen and pay attention to his teaching. He says to keep his words and treasure his commandments, to bind them on his fingers and write them on his heart. This wisdom and insight, he says, will keep you from the adulteress.

In verses 6-20 Solomon speaks of a young and innocent man who walks on the street near the adulteress. The wily adulteress comes out to meet him, seizes him and kisses him, and lures him to her bedroom because her husband is gone and will not return for some time.

In verses 21-23 the young man is seduced by her smooth talk and follows her. Like an ox being led to slaughter, he doesn't realize what this infidelity will cost him.

In verses 24-27 Solomon exhorts his son to listen and pay attention. He says to steer clear of the adulteress, turn away from her, and do not stray into her path, because her way is a way that leads to death.

# What I Noticed Today (Proverbs 8-11)

## Proverbs 8

In Proverbs 8 Solomon speaks of wisdom as a woman; her invitation, her virtues, and her rewards.

In verses 1-5 wisdom stands on the street and calls out to men to learn prudence and sense.

In verses 6-11 wisdom exhorts the listener to listen to what is righteous, saying her instruction is more important than worldly wealth (silver, gold, jewels).

In verses 12-21 the emphasis switches to wisdom herself

**Note:** The use of 16 personal pronouns in these 10 verses.

If a person has wisdom they have prudence, knowledge and discretion. By contrast, wisdom hates pride, arrogance, and perverted speech. Wisdom provides counsel, sound judgment, and understanding. With wisdom kings, princes, and nobles rule justly. Wisdom loves those who love her and she is found by those who diligently seek her. The fruit (benefits) of wisdom are more precious than gold or silver. Wisdom, righteousness, and justice go together.

Verses 22-26 describe wisdom as being with the Lord in the beginning of His creative work. In fact, wisdom existed before creation (mentioned 5 times in verses 22-23).

In verses 27-31 wisdom says she was present when God made the heavens, the deep, the skies, and the seas rejoicing with Him in the creation and in man.


In verses 32-36 wisdom exhorts young men to listen because those who have wisdom are blessed (appears three times v. 32, 33, and 34). Whoever finds wisdom finds life and obtains the favor of the Lord, but whoever does not find wisdom injures himself, and those who hate wisdom love death.

## Proverbs 9

Proverbs 9 summarizes Proverbs 1-8 contrasting wisdom with folly. Wisdom is portrayed as a woman of good character preparing a banquet, while folly is portrayed as a harlot preparing stolen food.

In verses 1-6 wisdom builds her house, slaughters beasts, prepares wine, and has set the table in preparation for her banquet. She sends young women into the community inviting the simple (naïve) and those who lack the sense to come in and eat, and gain insight.





In verses 7-12 accepting the invitation of wisdom is contrasted with the invitation of folly. A scoffer and the wicked will hate you while giving instruction to a wise man will result in him gaining more wisdom. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom and knowledge of God brings insight.

In verses 13-18 folly is portrayed as loud and seductive. Taking the highest point in the city she calls out to the simple (naïve) and those who lack the sense to come in and eat stolen food in secret. Her guests don't realize they are in the depths of Sheol.

## Proverbs 10

Proverbs 10 begins a long series of 375 sayings that contrast the righteous (wise) with the wicked (foolish).

**Note:** Most of the verses are a form of parallelism (comparisons, completions, contrasts).

The wise are characterized by bringing joy and are diligent. The wise will follow instructions and will increase in knowledge and share it with others. The wise know when to be quiet, do not boast about sin and are serious about following God's teaching.

The benefits of being wise are they enjoy God's protection, provision, and blessings, they are encouraging (giving life) to others, they prosper in their work, their future is secure and they are joyful. The wise person's words match his actions (talk matches walk).

## Proverbs 11

The contrasts of the wise and foolish continue in Proverbs 11.

The integrity of the righteous guides them. They are humble and blameless. God keeps them from lust, death, trouble, gossip, and protects their families. They desire what God desires, sowing righteousness. They are a blessing to others.

By contrast, the wicked are proud, treacherous, lustful, full of trouble, cruel, crooked hearts, evil, and lacking in discretion.

# What I Noticed Today

## (Proverbs 12-15)

### Proverbs 12

There are six sections or themes discussed in Proverbs 12:

In verses 1-3 the character of a good man who obtains favor from the Lord is contrasted with the character of the wicked.

In verse 4 the relationship between husband and wife is in view. An excellent wife is described as a crown to her husband in contrast with a wife who brings shame.

In verses 5-8 the plans and advice of the righteous are contrasted with the wicked. The righteous are honest while the wicked are deceitful. The advice of the righteous deliver/build up, but the wicked destroy. The house of the righteous is secure while the wicked perishes. The righteous man is appreciated for his good sense while the wicked is despised.

In verses 9-12 the righteous man's view of material things is contrasted with that of a wicked man. The righteous man is content with what he has while a wicked man makes a show of his status. A righteous man cares for his animals while a wicked man does not. The righteous man works to provide for his needs while a wicked man chases after worthless pursuits. A righteous man bears fruit while a wicked man covets what others have.

In verses 13-23 Solomon contrasts the speech of a righteous man with the speech of a wicked man. The wicked avoid trouble with their speech, while a wicked man is trapped by his lies. A wise man listens to advice while a foolish man thinks himself right. The wise man remains calm when insulted but the fool is quick to show his anger. The righteous man gives honest testimony while the wicked man lies. The righteous man speaks healing, encouraging words but the wicked man speaks harshly. The righteous man speaks truthfully while the wicked man's lies are soon exposed. The righteous man is peaceful bringing joy while the wicked devises evil. The righteous man is protected from trouble but the wicked man's life is filled with trouble. The righteous are truthful and are a delight to the Lord while the wicked lies and is an abomination to the Lord. The prudent man does not show off his knowledge while the fool proclaims folly.

In verses 24-28 the path of the righteous is contrasted with the path of the wicked. The diligent will rule while the slothful will be put to forced labor. The righteous man offers encouraging words and is a guide to his neighbor but a wicked man is deceitful and leads people astray. A diligent man will treasure what he has while a wicked man will waste his resources. The righteous man's path leads to life where there is no death.

## Proverbs 13

There are five sections or themes discussed in Proverbs 13:

In verses 1-3 contrasts the speech of a wise man against the speech of the foolish. A wise son listens to their parent's instruction while a foolish son doesn't. The speech of a wise man is fruitful. The wise man controls his speech and preserves his life.

In verses 4-11 Solomon contrasts the work ethic of the righteous man against that of the lazy man. The righteous man works diligently and is satisfied. The righteous hate lies and is guarded by his righteousness. The righteous do not make a show of their wealth knowing that wealth can bring threats. The life of the righteous brings joy. The righteous work hard gaining wealth slowly.

In verses 12-19 the hopes and desires of the wise are described. The wise have hope and receive and accept instruction. The wise know and follow God's Law and win the favor of God. The wise act prudently and are trustworthy messengers. The wise heed correction and are successful. The wise realize their hopes and are joyful.

In verses 20-21 speak to learning from others. The righteous surround themselves with the wise and learn from them and are blessed with prosperity.

In verses 22-25 the righteous man's relationship to his family. The righteous man provides for and leaves an inheritance for his grandchildren. The righteous man works hard and prospers. The righteous man who loves his children is diligent in his discipline. The righteous man is satisfied with what he has.

## Proverbs 14

There are four major sections or themes in Proverbs 14:

In verses 1-10 Solomon contrast the way of the wise in their daily life against the way of the foolish. The wise woman builds up her house. The righteous walk in the way of the Lord. The righteous watch what they say. The righteous are a faithful witness who discerns truth and avoids the foolish. The righteous give thought to their conduct. The righteous seek reconciliation with God.

In verses 11-15 the wise are prepared for life and for death. The righteous will flourish, trusting in God. The wise person is fruitful giving thought to their actions.

In verses 16-27 Solomon contrasts the wise man who fears the Lord against the foolish man who does not. The wise man turns away from sin and hates those who scheme and plot evil. The prudent gain knowledge. The righteous man is blessed because they are generous to the poor. The righteous avoid evil and gain loves and steadfastness. The wise are blessed with wealth. They are truthful. The righteous have confidence and are given life because they



fear the Lord.

In verses 28-35 Solomon considers how the wise view their duty as citizens. The wise know rulers need support. The wise control their tempers and live in peace. The wise honor God by being generous to the needy. A nation is exalted by the righteous. The righteous servant serves the leaders with wisdom

## Proverbs 15

There are seven major sections or themes in Proverbs 15:

In verses 1-7 Solomon continues with instruction about a wise person's speech. The wise answer softly turning away wrath. The wise commend knowledge. The righteous encourage and bring healing. The wise accept their parent's correction. The wise share their knowledge.

In verses 8-9 Solomon says the prayers of the righteous please the Lord.

In verses 10-12 Solomon describes the wicked person's response to discipline. The wicked die because they reject God's way. The wicked resent correction.

In verses 13-15 Solomon describes the heart of the wise. The wise are happy and they seek knowledge. The wise have cheerful hearts.

In verses 16-17 Solomon describes how the wise person values God's love. The wise choose to love God knowing that it is better to have a little and love God than have much and reject God.

In verses 18-30 Solomon contrasts the behavior of the wise with the behavior of the wicked. The wise man is patient and reduces dissension. The path of the righteous overcomes obstacles. The wise child brings joy to their parents. The wise man walks a straight path. The wise succeed because they plan and seek counsel. The righteous are prudent and humble. The righteous man's words are pure; they hate bribes, and they consider well what they say. The Lord is close to the righteous and hears their prayers. The righteous are cheerful bringing good news.

In verses 31-33 Solomon reinforces how the wise man heeds correction. The wise man listens to correction and surrounds himself with those that are wise. The wise man listens to correction and gains insight. The wise man fears the Lord, humbles himself, and accepts His correction.

# What I Noticed Today

## (Proverbs 16-19)

### Proverbs 16

**Note:** Proverbs 10-15 illustrate the difference between the wise and the foolish lifestyle. Proverbs 16 shifts the emphasis to the duties of the wise and the righteous person.

There are 7 major sections or themes in Proverbs 16.

In verses 1-9 Solomon distinguishes between the plans of man and the purpose of God. Man thinks he is pure but God sees the heart. We must depend completely upon the Lord if we want our plans to succeed. We must trust in God's purpose. God will punish the arrogant, wicked person. We must turn away from evil and fear the Lord because if we seek to please the Lord He will give us peace even from our enemies. It is better to be poor and righteous than rich and dishonest. We may make plans but it is God who directs our steps.

In verses 10-15 Solomon explains that God has ordained leaders to be His representatives. These leaders speak at God's direction. God sets the standards for honesty, not men. Leaders value honest speech. Rulers (in that day) were sovereign so be careful not to stir up anger in the ruler.

In verses 16-17 Solomon says to get wisdom because it is more valuable than gold or silver. The upright leader turns away from evil and guards himself from evil.

In verses 18-19 Solomon warns leaders about the dangers of pride leading to destruction. It is better to live humbly than with the proud.


In verses 20-26 Solomon explains that it is important to trust the Lord and seek wisdom. The man who pays attention to and trusts God's word will be blessed. A wise man's speech is judicious and persuasive. Gracious speech is soothing and encouraging. Many roads seem right to a man but they end in death (a repeat of Proverbs 14:12).

In verses 27-30 Solomon warns about evil, dishonest, violent men who scheme and pursue evil.

In verses 31-33 Solomon describes three kinds of people to respect: the older men who have been blessed by a righteous life, a man who controls his temper, and the man who trusts in the Lord's decisions.

### Proverbs 17

Proverbs 17 continues Solomon's discussion of the duties of the wise and righteous person but here he includes the family as well as the larger community. There are five major sections or themes in Proverbs 17.



In verses 1-6 Solomon's focus is on good behavior. Peace in the home with little is better than anger in the home that is prosperous. The wise and faithful servant should be rewarded but not a shameful child. Avoid the evildoers who speak with wicked lips. Do not mock the poor, God is the Creator of all! Children and grandchildren of honor are blessings to their grandparents.

In verses 7-9 Solomon warns about the eloquent fool and the lying leader. Bribes may make you seem successful but God detests bribes. To build a relationship one must be willing to forgive and not talk about it with others.

In verses 10-16 Solomon describes the foolish, evil man. Wise people learn from discipline but not the foolish man. Evil people seek out rebellion. Be wary of confronting a fool. Do not return evil for good. Starting an argument is like opening the floodgates – it is better to drop the matter before a quarrel ensues. God hates the man who justifies the wicked and the man who condemns the righteous. A fool has no interest in gaining wisdom.

In verses 17-26 Solomon describes a true friend as one who is loyal and stands by you in times of adversity. Those who love transgression love strife. Men with crooked hearts and deceitful tongues will suffer calamity. A foolish child brings sorrow to the family. A joyful heart improves health. A wicked man accepts a bribe to pervert justice. A foolish son brings grief and sorrow to their parents. Always be just, do not punish a righteous man.

In verses 27-28 Solomon discusses the importance of controlling our speech and temper. A knowledgeable person controls their words and a cool-headed person has understanding.

## Proverbs 18

In Proverbs 18 Solomon continues his discussion of the duties of the wise and righteous person. There are seven major sections or themes in Proverbs 18.

In verses 1-8 Solomon warns against bad behavior and speech. Do not live in isolation, it affects your judgment. A fool is more interested in expressing their opinion than in gaining understanding. A wicked person causes contempt, shame, and disgrace. Words of wisdom are a blessing. Don't be partial to the wicked or deprive the innocent of justice. A fool uses language to start fights and will bring about his ruin.

In verses 9-15 Solomon says wise men trust in the Lord but not fools. Being lazy is destructive. The righteous man finds security in the Lord, not in wealth, or their own abilities. A foolish man jumps to conclusion before hearing all the facts. Nurture your spirit and keep it strong. An intelligent, wise man seeks knowledge.

In verses 16-19 Solomon speaks of justice. Always hear both sides of a story when settling a dispute. Always seek peace. Avoid offending a friend because it creates barriers to settling a dispute.

In verses 20-21 Solomon says fruitful words are satisfying. Words have great power.

In verse 22 Solomon says a good wife is a blessing from the Lord.

In verse 23 Solomon advises not to speak harshly to the poor.

In verse 24 Many friends may bring a man to ruin. It is better to have a few close friends who are like brothers.

## Proverbs 19

The duties of the wise and righteous continue in Proverbs 19. There are six major sections or themes in Proverbs 19.

In verses 1-3 Solomon says it is better to be a poor man with integrity than a man of deceitful speech who is a fool. Haste and desire lacking knowledge lead to mistakes. Don't be like a foolish man who ruins his own life then blames God.

In verses 4-7 Discusses the selfish human nature. People are drawn to friends with money but abandon the poor. A man who bears false testimony will come to ruin. Don't selfishly seek out friendships with wealthy people for what they can do for you. A poor man's family deserts him as do his friends while they ignore his pleas for help.

In verses 8-12 Solomon stresses the importance of doing the right thing. Wisdom and understanding will discover good. Never provide false testimony or tell lies. Beware a fool living in luxury or a slave who rules over princes. A wise man is slow to anger and overlooks offenses. Be aware of a ruler's state of mind; they have the power to be wrathful or full of favor.

In verses 13-14 Solomon says it is important to protect your family. A foolish son and a quarrelsome wife destroy a family. A wife of understanding is a valuable gift from God.

In verses 15-25 Solomon reinforces the importance of being disciplined. A lazy, slothful person sleeps away their life and resources. Obey God's commandments to safeguard your life. Discipline your children. Do not rescue an angry man from his punishment, you will only have to do it again. A man who listens to advice and accepts instruction will gain wisdom for the future. Man makes many plans in his own mind but God's purposes will prevail. A man of unflinching love, even if poor, is preferred to a man who is a liar. Fear of the Lord leads to life. A lazy man will not even lift a hand to feed himself. Scorners do not learn from discipline, the simple (foolish) may learn prudence, but the wise man gains understanding

In verses 26-29 Solomon reveals the consequences of failing to live wisely. A violent son brings reproach and shame. A person who rejects instruction will eventually go astray. A wicked man mocks justice and ultimately they are rejecting God. Scoffers (those who mock others) and fools will be punished.

# What I Noticed Today (Proverbs 20-22)

## Proverbs 20

Solomon's exposition of the duties of the wise and righteous continues in Proverbs 20.

There are six major sections or themes in Proverbs 20.

In verses 1-4 Solomon warns of foolish behavior that surrounds us. Alcohol in excess leads to bad behavior. Be careful not to provoke a leader to anger because they have the power to punish. Avoid mixing into other's affairs and starting arguments. Don't be lazy, avoiding work, and then wonder why you don't reap a harvest.

In verses 5-8 Solomon reveals the importance of discerning truth from others. A man of understanding will draw out the purpose in a man's heart. Be wary of those who claim loyalty (steadfast love) but are unfaithful. A righteous parent will be a blessing to their children. A leader's purpose is to execute judgment and discover evil.

In verses 9-12 Solomon reminds us that everyone is guilty of some sin. No one can say they have cleansed their hearts and are free from sin. Be fair and honest in all transactions and remember that the Lord detests dishonesty. Even a child's character (intentions) are seen in his actions. Be attentive to people's needs using both your eyes and ears.

In verses 13-17 Solomon stresses the importance of being wise when making business deals. Be diligent in your work; don't be sleeping when you should be working. Be wary of those who might misrepresent value and engage in deceitful business practices. Having knowledge is like a precious jewel; it is more valuable than gold. Hold people accountable when they pledge collateral against a debt. People who steal enjoy pleasure for a time but eventually their sin is uncovered.

In verses 18-21 Solomon stresses the importance of wise counsel. Establish plans based on wise counsel especially when making big decisions (waging war). Be wary of someone who slanders (talks about others), they will betray confidences. Do not curse your parents. An inheritance to a young person may not be a blessing.

In verses 22-30 Solomon reminds us that there is both human and divine justice in this world. Do not seek revenge yourself leave that up to God. Deceptive, dishonest business practices are an abomination to the Lord. God's path for us is beyond our capacity to fully understand. Do not make promises or vows hastily. Wise leaders remove and punish the wicked. Steadfast love and faithfulness preserve a king (a leader). Respect both the strength of the young, and the experience and wisdom of the elders.



Punishment for wrongs protects both the person and others in society.

## Proverbs 21

The duties of the wise and righteous are explained in terms of God's sovereignty over the lives of man.

There are five major sections or themes in Proverbs 21.

In verses 1-3 Solomon reminds us that God examines the hearts of man. The Lord can direct the heart of a leader any way He wishes. No matter how you justify an action God knows your heart. Obedience in doing right is more important to God than acts of "religious service."

In verses 4-19 Solomon warns wise people of the need to guard against foolish, sinful behavior. Arrogance, pride, and a wicked lifestyle are sinful. Do not gain wealth by lying. Violent men who refuse to do right will face justice. Wise men walk on a righteous path. Seek peace with your wife. Wicked people pursue evil. Scoffers learn little from punishment but the simple do, and the wise gain wisdom. Judgment of the wicked will occur. Be sensitive to the cries of the poor. Bribery is wrong. Justice is a joy to the righteous. Do not stray from the ways of the wise (Godly). A life focused on indulgences and pleasure leads to poverty. The wicked will reap what they sow. It is better to remain single than be married to a quarrelsome woman.

In verses 20-23 Solomon gives four ways wise people can protect themselves from the foolish. Save and prepare for the future. Pursue righteousness. Wisdom will conquer the wicked. Controlling what you say will keep you out of trouble.

In verses 24-29 Solomon reveals ways the wise protect themselves from sin. Watch out for the prideful mocker and the sluggard who refuses to work. Give generously. Beware the man who is hypocritical in their worship, living a wicked lifestyle. An honest man will endure. A wise man thinks before acting.

In verses 30-31 Solomon says nothing will stop God from achieving His purpose. No wisdom of man can prevail against God. The victory is His!


## Proverbs 22

Proverbs 22:1-16 marks the end of Solomon's exposition of the duties of the wise and righteous that began in Proverbs 10.

There are three major sections or themes in Proverbs 22:1-16.

In verses 1-2 Solomon says that a good name is more important than wealth and that God is the Creator of all.

In verses 3-11 Solomon describes how the law of sowing and reaping governs humans as well as crops. The prudent man hides from danger the simple man does not. The reward for humility and fearing the Lord is wealth, honor, and life. Guard your soul by staying away from the snares of the wicked.



Teach your children to live in the way God has designed them. The borrower is a slave to the lender. God will bring justice on the wicked. It is a blessing to be able to share with the poor. Peace can be achieved by driving out the scoffers and mockers. Leaders respect those whose hearts are pure and whose speech is gracious.

In verses 12-16 Solomon warns that God is opposed to certain types of people; the traitor, the sluggard, forbidden (immoral) women, foolish children, and those who oppress the poor.

Proverbs 22:17-24:33 shifts to specific lessons the wise need to learn. There are two major sections or themes in 22:17-21.

In verses 17-18 Solomon says it is important to develop your character by paying attention to the words of the wise, remember them and teach them to others.

In verses 19-21 Solomon underscores the importance of trusting the Lord, understand the sayings of the wise, and be ready to teach them to others.

Proverbs 22:22-24:22 introduces a new group of sayings focused on increasing wisdom and trust in the Lord.

There are five additional sections or themes in the balance of Proverbs 22.

In verses 22-23 Solomon warns against taking advantage of the poor and oppressed just because of their condition.

In verses 24-25 Solomon warns about associating with violent, wrathful (vengeful) people or you may become like them.

In verses 26-27 Solomon warns not to put up security for other's debts and risk the loss of your own property.

In verse 28 Do not steal property by moving property boundary stones.

In verse 29 Solomon says skilled diligent workers will be noticed by the king (leaders).

# What I Noticed Today

## (Proverbs 23-26)

### Proverbs 23

Proverbs 23 continues the group of sayings focused on increasing wisdom and trust in the Lord.

There are thirteen additional sections or themes in Proverbs 23.

In verses 1-3 Solomon says it is good to show restraint when dining with rulers. Be aware of your surroundings and the occasion and don't be a glutton. A deceptive host may be entertaining you in order to get something from you.

In verses 4-5 Solomon suggests that life is about more than money and possessions. Don't work just for the sake of acquiring wealth because it can disappear quickly.

In verses 6-8 Solomon warns about desiring what a greedy, stingy person has because they are deceptive and insincere.

In verse 9 Solomon says it is best to avoid fools because no matter what you say they will reject wisdom.

In verses 10-11 Solomon warns not to move a property boundary stone (it is stealing) because God sees what you are doing.

In verses 12 Solomon wise people apply themselves to learn and listen to words of knowledge.

In verses 13-14 Solomon says it is important to discipline our children, including physical discipline when necessary because it will save the child from spiritual death.


In verses 15-16 Solomon addresses his son saying if his son is wise then he will be glad and he will exult in his son's honesty.

In verses 17-18 Solomon exhorts his son to fear the Lord and trust in Him for his future.

In verses 19-21 Solomon addresses his son telling him not to associate with drunkards and gluttons. They will come to poverty because they are undisciplined.

In verses 22-25 Solomon tells his son to listen to him and honor his mother. To focus his life on getting wisdom, instruction, and understanding because a wise son makes a father proud.

In verses 26-28 Solomon tells his son to focus his heart and eyes on his ways (wisdom), to avoid the lure of the adulteress.



In verses 29-35 Solomon warns of the effects of drinking to excess. Such drinking causes woe, sorrow, strife, complaining, wounds (from fights), and bloodshot eyes (hangovers). He warns his son not to be tempted by drinking; don't even look upon it because the consequence is deadly.

## Proverbs 24

Proverbs 24 continues the group of sayings focused on increasing wisdom and trust in the Lord.

There are eighteen additional sections or themes in Proverbs 24:1-22

In verses 1-2 Solomon repeats instructions to his son given in Proverbs 1:10-19 to not be envious of evil men or even be around them because they are violent troublemakers.

In verses 3-4 Solomon a good home is the result of wise planning, and intimate knowledge of family members makes it a place of joy.

In verses 5-6 Solomon says a wise man is strong and knowledge makes him stronger. With a number of wise counselors, there is victory.

In verse 7 Solomon warns that fools do not have wisdom and they do not provide sound judgment.

In verses 8-9 Solomon identifies those who plan to do evil as sinful schemers; who reject the wisdom of God (scoffers).

In verse 10 Solomon says those who faint during a trial (face adversity) are weak

In verse 11-12 Solomon says a leader we should rescue those who face oppression because God watches over us and knows our hearts.

In verse 13-14 Solomon addresses his son directly telling him to eat honey because it is healthy, just as wisdom is good for your soul.

In verse 15-16 Solomon warns not to mistreat or attack the righteous (God's people), as the wicked people are inclined to do because God restores the righteous.

In verse 17-18 Solomon says not to rejoice when your enemy stumbles and falls because it is God who gave you victory.

In verse 19-20 Solomon says for the third time (23:17, 24:1) not to worry about or envy the wicked because the Lord will judge them.

In verse 21-22 Solomon addresses his son directly exhorting him to fear the Lord and to avoid those who do not fear the Lord because disaster will certainly come to them.

In verses 23-25 Solomon warns judges (rulers, leaders) not to show favoritism, not to call the wicked right, but to rebuke the wicked and receive a blessing.



In verse 26 Solomon says being truthful shows you care for someone.

In verse 27 Solomon says it is important to establish priorities; do your outside work in the fields, then build your house.

In verse 28 Solomon says not to testify against another unless you have good cause and then testify honestly.

In verse 29 Solomon warns against planning or taking revenge on someone who has hurt you.

In verse 30-34 Solomon warns again about being lazy. He gives an example of the sluggard doesn't work his field, it becomes overgrown with weeds, and he ends up in poverty because he has no crops.

## Proverbs 25

Proverbs 25 begins a section of Solomon's wise sayings that were collected by King Hezekiah's and his men.

There are three main sections or themes in Proverbs 25.

In verses 1-7 Solomon discusses the duties of a ruler. A Godly ruler needs to search out the things of God (truth). He must keep some confidences (be unsearchable). To preserve the nation, he must remove the dross, the wicked, so that his rule will be righteous. Finally, those who serve the king should come before him, not to promote themselves, but in humble service.

In verses 8-15 Solomon advises all who are involved in some kind of dispute to not rush off to court where you may lose but try to settle differences privately without betraying confidences. Wise people choose their words carefully. Be a faithful and trustworthy messenger for your rulers. Beware of the man who boasts about giving but does not fulfill his promise. Being patient and using soft speech can persuade and reduce opposition.

In verses 16-28 Solomon uses a group of similes (he makes comparisons using lest, like, or as) to illustrate how to build your reputation. Practice moderation and avoid overindulgence. Don't visit others too often or you'll wear out your welcome. Don't give false testimony because you may injure someone. Don't trust a treacherous person because they bring pain. Be sensitive when trying to cheer up someone who is suffering. Being kind to your enemy (giving them food or drink) will bring a reward from God. Be wary of someone who is a backbiting gossip. It is better to live in peace in a small home (Proverbs 21:9) than in luxury with a contentious wife. Good news is refreshing to a weary soul. Never compromise with the wicked – it pollutes your righteousness. Do not seek your own glory by bragging about yourself. Be wary of a man without self-control, they deteriorate like a city with broken walls.

## Proverbs 26

Proverbs 26 continues the section of Solomon's wise sayings that were collected by King Hezekiah's and his men.



There are four main sections or themes in Proverbs 26.

In verses 1-12 the similes continue as Solomon describes the ways of a fool. Honor is not fitting for a fool. A fool utters worthless curses. A fool needs to be disciplined to be controlled. Responding to or arguing with a fool is a waste of time. Never trust a fool with an important message or responsibility. A proverb is useless to a fool. Never bestow honor on a fool. Never trust a fool's advice. A proverb is of no value to a fool. Never hire a fool or a drunkard. Rather than learning from his mistakes a fool repeats them. There is more hope for a fool to change than someone who is prideful and conceited.

In verses 13-16 Solomon now describes a lazy man (a sluggard). A lazy man makes wild excuses for his lack of work. A lazy man sleeps in when he should be up working. A lazy man is too lazy to care for himself he wants others to care for him. A lazy man thinks he has life figured out, that he has beaten the system.

In verses 17-22 Solomon turns his attention to describing the busybody. Busybodies will get involved in arguments that don't concern them. The busybody like to stir up fires by deceiving others. Stopping a gossip stops a quarrel like a fire dies that has run out of wood. A contentious person stirs up trouble and provokes others to fight. Gossipers delight in telling tales.

In verses 23-28 Solomon describes the man who likes to deceive others. The deceiver who hates may look good on the outside but they have evil hearts. They are not what they appear to be. Though his hatred may be covered by his deception his wickedness will eventually be exposed. The deceiver's lies and flattery are a sign of hatred for their enemies.

# What I Noticed Today

## (Proverbs 27-31)

### Proverbs 27

Proverbs 27 continues the section of Solomon's wise saying that were collected by King Hezekiah's and his men.

There are four main sections or themes in Proverbs 27.

In verses 1-4 Solomon describes four sins that often go unnoticed yet are prevalent in our lives. Don't boast about tomorrow, or the future, you're presuming on God that you will have a tomorrow! Avoid boasting. Let others sing your praises. Be wary of the fool who seeks to provoke you to anger. Avoid jealousy, it is more damaging than wrath or anger.

In verses 5-10 Solomon describes the qualities of a great friend. They love you enough to rebuke you when needed. The needy who are hungry appreciate help more than those who have much and are full. Do not stray from your home or desert your loved ones. A friend's honest counsel will make your heart glad. Never forsake your friends or take that relationship for granted. Friends are the ones who will help you when you need it most.

In verses 11-22 many of Solomon's instructions to his son are repeated, underscoring their importance! A son who lives wisely brings joy to their parents. A prudent child see danger and avoids it. Hold people accountable for their pledges of security on loans. Be on guard for those who lack common courtesy, and are loud and boisterous. Don't be a contentious (argumentative, nagging) spouse. Help one another by helping each other improve. A diligent worker will be honored. A man's character reveals his heart. Control your desires because they are never satisfied. Praise reveals a man's character; either arrogance or humility. No matter what you do to correct or punish a fool nothing will change him.


In verses 23-27 Solomon discusses the importance of managing your resources. Know the state or condition of your investments/resources because wealth does not last forever, and nothing is certain. There are cycles/seasons to the production of income; grass grows, vegetation is harvested, lambs provide wool for clothing, goats can be sold to buy land and provide milk for your family.

### Proverbs 28

Proverbs 28 continues the section of Solomon's wise saying that were collected by King Hezekiah's and his men.

There are two main sections or themes in Proverbs 28.

In verses 1-12 Solomon discusses the conduct of leaders and citizens. The



righteous are bold. A leader of understanding and knowledge brings long-lasting stability. Wicked men oppress the poor. The righteous keep God's law and resist the wicked. Those who seek the Lord understand justice. It is better to be poor and have integrity than to be rich and corrupt. Wise children keep God's law. The wicked accumulate wealth unjustly but the righteous give it to the poor. The wicked turn away from God and He does not hear their prayers. The righteous will receive an inheritance from God. The righteous man who is poor will see through the deceit of the rich wicked man. The people rejoice when the righteous rise to power.

In verses 13-28 Solomon discusses the proper perspective to money. Those who confess their will obtain mercy from God. The man who fears the Lord will be blessed. Wicked rulers terrorize the poor. A wise leader who hates dishonest gain will live a long life. The wise man does not help the wicked avoid justice. The man of integrity walks in safety. The diligent worker will provide for his family. A wise man who is faithful to God will be blessed. The wicked will show partiality. A stingy man chases wealth not realizing that poverty will be his end. The righteous man who offers a rebuke is better than a man who flatters. The wicked steal from their own parents. The man who trusts in the Lord will prosper. The wise man who trusts in the Lord's wisdom will be delivered. The righteous give generously to the poor. When wicked men rise to power people hide but when the righteous rise the people flourish.

## Proverbs 29


Proverbs 29 continues the section of Solomon's wise saying that were collected by King Hezekiah's and his men.

There are three main sections or themes in Proverbs 29.

In verses 1-10 Solomon discusses how our character is revealed in how we treat others. The man who stubbornly rejects correction will be broken. The people rejoice when the righteous rise to power. A son who loves wisdom makes his father proud. A wise leader who is just builds a nation up. Beware the man who is full of flattery because they attempt to trap you with their flattery. A righteous man is full of joy. A righteous man protects the rights of the poor. The wise man turns away anger and brings calm. The wise man avoids arguments with fools. Wicked men hate the upright.

In verses 11-24 Solomon discusses how leaders and citizens should behave. A wise man holds back his thoughts. A leader who listens to liars will be surrounded by liars. Both the poor man and the man who oppresses the poor will be judged by God. A leader who judges the poor fairly will be established. Wise parents discipline their children. Wicked leaders cause the spread of wickedness. Disciplined children are a delight to their parents. The righteous keep God's law. Wise leaders instruct and correct their servants (employees). A wise man avoids speaking hastily. Foolish leaders fail to correct and discipline their servants (employees). The wrathful man stirs up strife and anger. The righteous, humble man will obtain honor. The wicked are accomplices to crime and keep silent to avoid convicting themselves.





In verses 25-27 Solomon discusses the righteous man's desire for justice. Whoever trusts in the Lord will be safe. The wicked man hates the righteous man.

## Proverbs 30

Proverbs 30 contains the wise sayings of King Agur.

There are five main sections or themes in Proverbs 30.

In verses 1-4 Agur confesses his weakness to God. He admits that he is weak and uneducated without full knowledge of Creator God.

In verses 5-6 Agur describes how every word of God is true and a refuge for those who trust in him. He warns others not to add to God's word.

In verses 7-9 Agur prays to God to help him never lie or deceive others and to provide for his material needs.

In verses 10-14 Agur exposes five groups of people who live in open rebellion to God. Wicked people slander (lie) about a servant to his master. Children who curse (are disrespectful to) their parents. Those who self-righteously believe they are clean but live immorally. People who take advantage of and oppress the poor and the needy.

In verses 15-33 Agur developed a series of lists of lessons he had learned. Greedy people are like leeches; they never have enough. Children who mock and disobey their parents will be punished. His amazement at nature; eagles, serpents, a ship on the seas, and a man with a virgin. Avoid the adulteress who admits no wrong. Four situations that cause the earth to tremble; a slave who becomes king, a fool filled with food, an unloved woman who gets a husband, and a servant who displaces her mistress. Four small things on earth that are examples of being successful; the ants, the rock badgers, the locusts, and the lizard. Four things that are stately; the fearless lion, the strutting rooster or male goat, and a king with his army.

## Proverbs 31

Proverbs 31 contains the wise sayings King Lemuel learned from his mother.


There are four main sections or themes in Proverbs 31.

In verse 1 Lemuel says this is an oracle of things his mother taught him.

In verse 2 His mother made a vow of committing Lemuel to the Lord.

In verses 3-9 Lemuel's mother warns Lemuel to beware of immorality with women, to beware the effects of alcohol on him and the people, and to stand up to defend the rights of the poor and needy.

In verses 10-12 Lemuel's mother describes an excellent wife; she is precious, she is trustworthy, she does good for her husband, she works willingly, she buys food for her family, she gets up early to make breakfast for the family and staff, she manages the household business affairs, she is energetic and



strong, she makes wise purchases and works late at night, she makes clothes, she helps the poor and the needy, she plans for the future and is prepared, she takes care of her appearance, her husband is an honored leader, she supplements the family income with what she makes, she has strength and dignity, she is wise and speaks with kindness, she manages her household well and is not idle, her children and her husband are blessed by her and praise her, she is not focused on outward beauty, but fears the Lord, and because of all she has done she deserves to be praised.