



THE BOOK OF PROVERBS 4U



PART 4

12 SAYINGS OF THE WISE

Proverbs Chapters 22:17-24:22, 24:23-34

The SAYINGS OF THE WISE and the 12 verses of the ADDITIONAL SAYINGS OF THE WISE (24:23-34), were most probably derived from the proverbs written by King Solomon. All the main teachings of Proverbs are to be found in this section - Trust in the Lord, Truth and Righteousness, Friends and Family and concern for the poor; including the woes of laziness, greed, gluttony and drunkenness (Pr 23:29-35). Many of the proverbs in the SAYINGS OF THE WISE, although worded differently, are repeats and have been omitted

Listen to the words of the wise - So that your trust may be in the Lord - To make you know the words of truth, that you may give a true answer to those who sent you. Pr 22:17,19, 21

Remove not the ancient landmark and enter not into the fields of the fatherless. For their Redeemer is mighty; He will plead their cause against you. Pr 23:10-11



In 2007 a team of Hebrew archaeologists discovered ancient beehives in the Galilee region, proving bee keeping was already flourishing in the 10th century B.C. Authorities previously considered the following biblical texts only could refer to wild honey, and other rich sources of sweetness from fruits and flowers.

The Holy Land is truly *a land flowing with milk and honey*. Exodus 3:8

My son, eat honey, because it is good, and the drippings of the honeycomb are sweet to your taste.

Have you found honey? Eat only as much as is sufficient for you, lest being filled with it, you vomit it.

Pr 24:13 Pr 25:16 (Pr 25:27)

Rejoice not when your enemy falls, and let not your heart be glad when he is overthrown. Lest the Lord see it and it be evil in His eyes and displease Him, and He turn his wrath from him.

Pr 24:17-18

These also are the sayings of the wise: To discriminate and show partiality, having respect of persons in judging, is not good.

Pr 24:23

To those (upright judges) who rebuke the wicked, it will go well with them and they will find delight and a blessing will be upon them.

Pr 24:25

13 PROVERBS OF SOLOMON COPIED BY THE MEN OF HEZEKIAH, KING OF JUDAH

Read Proverbs Chapters 25-29

Again, as with the SAYINGS OF THE WISE, many of these copied proverbs of Solomon have already been listed in other sections eg. FRIENDS AND NEIGHBOURS, RICHES AND POVERTY etc. Some of these proverbs are taken from the natural environment – about climate, the weather and the seasons of rain, cold, snow and times of heat and harvest.



Read Proverbs 25:1-7

The sayings begin with words of wisdom concerning kingship. There are also other proverbs about rulers, judges and officials throughout the Book of Proverbs.

It is the glory of God to conceal a thing, but the glory of kings to search out a thing.
Pr 25:2

Take away the wicked from before the king, and his throne will be established in righteousness.
Pr 25:5

Argue your cause with your neighbour himself; discover not and disclose not another's secret.
Pr 25:9

A word fitly spoken and in due season is like apples of gold in settings of silver.
Pr 25:11

Like the cold of snow in the time of harvest, so is a faithful messenger to those who send him; for he refreshes the life of his masters. Whoever falsely boasts of gifts (he does not give) is like clouds and wind without rain.
Pr 25:13-14

PROVERBS OF SOLOMON COPIED BY THE MEN OF HEZEKIAH, KING OF JUDAH –
continued.

*Let your foot seldom be in your neighbour's house,
lest he become tired of you and hate you.*

Pr 25:17



Confidence in an unfaithful man in time of trouble is like a broken tooth or a foot out of joint.

Pr 25:19

He who sings songs to a heavy heart is like him who lays off a garment in cold weather and like vinegar upon soda.

Pr 25:20

If your enemy is hungry, give him bread to eat; and if he is thirsty, give him water to drink.

Pr 25:21

The north wind brings forth rain; so does a backbiting tongue bring forth an angry countenance.

Pr 25:23

It is better to dwell in the corner of the housetop than to share a house with a quarrelsome and scolding woman.

Pr 25:24

Like cold water to a thirsty soul, so is good news from a far (home) country.

Pr 25:25

Like a muddied fountain and a polluted spring is a righteous man who compromises his integrity before the wicked.

Pr 25:26

PROVERBS OF SOLOMON COPIED BY THE MEN OF HEZEKIAH, KING OF JUDAH – continued.

The following verses give warnings and wise advice about self-confident fools. There are wise sayings about meddlers; the quarrelsome and the dishonest who always cause strife in society. Likewise included are proverbs about the tongue, that untameable, small member of the body; as manifested in the unkind and hateful words of whisperers, slanderers, tale-bearers, liars and especially flatterers.



Do you see a man wise in his own eyes and conceit? There is more hope for a self-confident fool than for him.

Pr 26:12

A lying tongue hates those it wounds and crushes, and a flattering mouth works ruin.

Pr 26:28 (27:14 28:23 29:5)

Do not boast of tomorrow, for you know not what a day may bring forth.

Pr 27:1

Let another man praise you, and not your own mouth; a stranger, and not your own lips.

Pr 27:2

Wrath is cruel and anger is an overwhelming flood, but who is able to stand before jealousy?

Pr 27:4

Open rebuke is better than love that is hidden.

Pr 27:5

Faithful are the wounds of a friend, but the kisses of an enemy are deceitful.

Pr 27:6

Like a bird that wanders from her nest, so is a man who strays from his home.

Pr 27:8

PROVERBS OF SOLOMON COPIED BY THE MEN OF HEZEKIAH, KING OF JUDAH – continued.

Oil and perfume rejoice the heart; so does the sweetness of a friend's counsel that comes from the heart. Pr 27:9

Evil men do not understand justice, but they who seek the Lord understand it fully. Pr 28:5

He who covers his transgressions will not prosper, but whoever confesses and forsakes his sins will obtain mercy. Pr 28:13



Like a roaring lion or a ravenous and charging bear - is a wicked ruler over a poor people. Pr 28:15

Whoever robs his father or his mother and says, This is no sin – he is in the same class as a destroyer.

Pr 28:24

A fool utters all his anger, but a wise man holds it back and stills it. Pr 29:11

If a ruler listens to falsehood all his officials will become wicked. Pr 29:12

The king who faithfully judges the poor, his throne shall be established continuously. Pr 29:14

Correct your son and he will give you rest; yes, he will give delight to your heart. Pr 29:17

The fear of man brings a snare, but whoever trusts in the Lord is safe and set on high. Pr 29:25

14. THE WORDS OF AGUR

Chapter 30

Agur from Massa is the son of Jakeh and his additional sayings are addressed in the first verse to two others. His words are those of a godly man, learned but humble in his burden of the Holy One. Agur's introductory words ask questions about the earth's Creator and also prophetically about the One Who descended and ascended into heaven, His name and His Son's name.

What is His name, and what is His Son's name, if you know? Pr 30:4

He refers to God as a shield to those who trust Him. To Agur, God's word is pure and true.

*Every word of God is tried and purified (true).
Add not to His words, lest He reprove you, and you be found a liar.* Pr 30:5-6

Read Proverbs 30:7-9

Agur asks God for two things - to avoid the sins of stealing, profaning God's name.

Remove far from me falsehood and lies; give me neither poverty nor riches; feed me with food that is needful. Pr 30:8

Agur continues his concern for the lowly. (servants)

Do not accuse and hurt a servant before his master. Pr 30:10

Agur defines 4 classes in society and continues to state his sayings numerically.

1. *There is a class of people who curse their fathers and do not bless their mothers.* Pr 30:11

2. *There is a class of people who are pure in their own eyes, and yet are not washed from their own filth.* Pr 30:12

3. *There is a class of people – oh, how lofty are their eyes and their raised eyelids!*

Pr 30:13

4. *There is a class of people whose teeth are as swords and whose fangs as knives, to devour the poor from the earth and the needy from among men.*

Pr 30:14



THE WORDS OF AGUR – continued.

Read Proverbs 30:15-17

The horse leech's (large in size) two greedy daughters give further emphasis in two, three, even four ways of never being satisfied –



Sheol (the place of the dead), the barren womb, the earth that is not satisfied with water, and the fire that says not, It is enough.

Pr 30:16

Agur then describes the mocking eye with disobedience to parents, followed by reciprocal punishment for such scornful behaviour. (Pr 30:17)

Agur's three, even four, WONDERFUL THINGS are next listed -

The way of an eagle in the air,



GOLDEN EAGLE

*the way of a serpent upon a rock, the way of a ship in the midst of the sea,
the way of a man with a maid.*

Pr 30:19

The next way by contrast - *the way of an adulterous woman.*

Pr 30:20

Read Proverbs 30:21-31

Agur describes three troublesome things, even four - then sayings, again in fours, about Things – little but wise; and finally four majestic things.

The lion, *mightiest among beasts*, the warhorse, the male goat, and a king at the head of his victorious army.

Agur concludes with maxims about foolish and evil ways; the need for restraint in speech and anger - the causes of strife.

(Pr 30:32-3)

15. KING LEMUEL

Read Proverbs 31:1-9

Lemuel of Massa may have been a Gentile king or even Solomon himself. King Lemuel's sayings list the godly wisdom and advice that his dedicated mother taught him. His wise mother goes straight to the point about the two dangers for young men, especially for a future king.

Give not your strength to (loose) women, nor your ways to those who ruin and destroy kings.

Pr 31:3

It is not for kings, O Lemuel, to drink wine, or for rulers to desire strong drink.

Pr 31:4

Lemuel's mother advised the use of strong drink only as a medicine; and having paved the way for integrity in kingship, she advocates justice for the rights of the poor and needy in society.

Godly wisdom, integrity of character, wealth management and concern for the poor are themes stated throughout the Book of Proverbs; including the instruction of children in all these matters.

16. THE IDEAL WIFE

Read Proverbs 31:10-31

The Book of Proverbs concludes in honour of the ideal wife. Her virtues are listed in an acrostic poem of 22 verses as in the Hebrew alphabet.

Her admirable qualities, in all her many duties and responsibilities for her home and family, are priceless and are described in detail.



A capable, intelligent and virtuous woman – who is he who can find her? She is far more precious than jewels and her value is far above rubies or pearls.

Pr 31:10

Such a woman is completely trustworthy and greatly valued by her husband and children. She is not only a capable housewife but her gracious ways extend to the poor and needy. Her husband considers her as excelling all others – more than the notable women in the Hebrew scriptures of the Old Testament. Think of them!

Yes, the ideal wife is worthy of praise for her outstanding qualities; but above all for her deeply spiritual dedication to the Lord.

Charm and grace are deceptive and beauty is vain, but a woman who reverently and worshipfully fears the Lord, she shall be praised!

Pr 31:30

CONCLUSION

The Book of Proverbs, mainly the wisdom writings of King Solomon, later compiled by scribes and other wise men, is the largest body of wisdom literature in the world. Instructions are given for a blessed, successful and prosperous life; God's wisdom being far superior to human wisdom. There are detailed instructions given for children on the many facets of human living.

The proverbs shed light on wise and foolish behaviour and their consequences. Sound advice is given on how to live a life pleasing to God. Wisdom is seeking guidance in prayer and evaluating future circumstances according to God's way as revealed in His word.

The Book of Proverbs is a fully rounded literary work, ending with the virtues and spiritual qualities of the ideal wife; in contrast to the immoral woman near the beginning. (Pr 2:16-19)

Finally, it must be emphasised again that King Solomon, who possessed great wisdom, sadly in the latter years of his reign turned to folly; his life thus epitomizing the two themes of Proverbs -

WISDOM AND FOLLY



Now, if Solomon with all his God-given gift of wisdom could descend into folly, how much more liable are all of us lesser mortals likely to fall into the errors of sin. But thanks be to God - Jesus Christ, the sinless Son of God, died for each one of us, shedding His blood on the Cross to save sinners by taking away all sin. For our forgiveness, He took upon Himself our sinful folly, stood in our place and bore God's punishment for sin - which is death. God, Who is Holy and Almighty, accepted Christ's sacrifice when He was raised in the Resurrection from death to life forever.

Jesus Christ is the gift of eternal life. Yes, Jesus died for you, so what is your response?

Wise or Foolish?

The Book of Proverbs stresses the reverent fear of the Lord as the principal thing giving light on life's journey, so choose to follow Christ, to accept the gift of Himself as your Saviour; for He is the – Light, as Jesus said -

I am the Light of the world.

John 8:12

Jesus' words, about Himself and Solomon's wisdom, are recorded in St. Matthew's Gospel –

The Queen of the south (Queen of Sheba) came from the ends of the earth to listen to the wisdom of Solomon, and behold,

One greater than Solomon is here.

Matthew 12:42

St. Paul writes -

In Him (Jesus) all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are stored.

Colossians 2:3



BOOK OF PROVERBS 4 U



NOTICE OF COPYRIGHT

'Scriptures taken, unless otherwise stated,
from THE AMPLIFIED BIBLE,
Old Testament copyright, © 1965, 1987
by The Zondervan Corporation.

The Amplified New Testament copyright © 1958, 1987
by the Lockman Foundation. Used by permission.'