

EXIT 20: Proverbs

PURPOSE: To teach people how to attain wisdom, discipline, and a prudent life, and how to do what is right, just, and fair (see 1:2, 3)—in short, to apply divine wisdom to daily life and to provide moral instruction

AUTHOR: Solomon wrote most of this book, with Agur and Lemuel contributing some of the later sections.



ORIGINAL AUDIENCE:

The people of Israel

DATE

WRITTEN:

Solomon wrote and compiled most of these proverbs early in his reign.

SETTING: This is a book of wise sayings, a textbook for teaching people how to live godly lives through the repetition of wise thoughts.

KEY VERSE: “The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge: but fools despise wisdom and instruction.” (Proverbs 1:7)

SPECIAL FEATURES: The book uses varied literary forms: poems, brief parables, pointed questions, and couplets. Other literary devices include antithesis, comparison, and personification.

OUTLINE:

- A. WISDOM FOR _____ PEOPLE (1:1—9:18)
- B. WISDOM FOR _____ PEOPLE (10:1—24:34)
- C. WISDOM FOR THE _____ (25:1—31:31)

CHRIST IN PROVERBS:

- **Wisdom Personified (8)**

MEGATHEMES

THEME	EXPLANATION	IMPORTANCE
Wisdom	God wants his people to be wise. Two kinds of people portray two contrasting paths of life. The fool is the wicked, stubborn person who hates or ignores God. The wise person seeks to know and love God.	When we choose God's way, he grants us wisdom. His Word, the Bible, leads us to live right, have right relationships, and make right decisions.
Relationships	Proverbs gives us advice for developing our personal relationships with friends, family members, and coworkers. In every relationship, we must show love, dedication, and high moral standards.	To relate to people, we need consistency, tact, and discipline to use the wisdom God gives us. If we don't treat others according to the wisdom God gives, our relationships will suffer.
Speech	What we say shows our real attitude toward others. How we talk reveals what we're really like. Our speech is a test of how wise we have become.	To be wise in our speech we need to use self-control. Our words should be honest and well chosen.
Work	God controls the final outcome of all we do. We are accountable to carry out our work with diligence and discipline, not laziness.	Because God evaluates how we live, we should work purposefully. We must never be lax or self-satisfied in using our skills.
Success	Although people work very hard for money and fame, God views success as having a good reputation, moral character, and the spiritual devotion to obey him.	A successful relationship with God counts for eternity. Everything else is perishable. All our resources, time, and talents come from God. We should strive to use them wisely.

Proverbs 1:1-7

The proverbs of Solomon the son of David, king of Israel;

To know wisdom and instruction; to perceive the words of understanding;

To receive the instruction of wisdom, justice, and judgment, and equity;

To give subtilty to the simple, to the young man knowledge and discretion.

A wise *man* will hear, and will increase learning; and a man of understanding shall attain unto wise counsels:

To understand a proverb, and the interpretation; the words of the wise, and their dark sayings.

The fear of the LORD *is* the beginning of knowledge: *but* fools despise wisdom and instruction.