

Session 17: Proverbs & Ecclesiastes

Videos:

- Overview: Proverbs (The Bible Project)
- Overview: Ecclesiastes (The Bible Project)

Recommended Readings from the ESV Study Bible:

- Introduction to the Poetic and Wisdom Literature (pp. 865–868)
- Introduction to Proverbs (pp. 1129–1134)
- Introduction to Ecclesiastes (pp. 1193–1196)

Handouts from The Bible Project:

- Proverbs Overview Poster
- Ecclesiastes Overview Poster

Handouts from Dr. Parke:

- Book of Proverbs - Slides from Dr. Parke's Teaching
- Book of Ecclesiastes - Slides from Dr. Parke's Teaching
- Wisdom Literature



WISDEST MAN IN THE ANCIENT WORLD (SEE 1 KINGS 4:29-33)

PROV

— A GUIDE FOR LIVING WISE

1-9 AN INTRODUCTION TO PROVERBS 1:1-9

PROVERBS OF SOLOMON

FOR GAINING **WISDOM**
HEBREW: KHOKHMAH
 SKILL, APPLIED KNOWLEDGE (SEE LEVITUS 37:1-3)

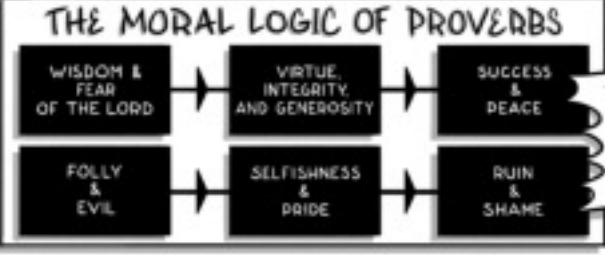


THE FEAR OF THE LORD
 • REVERENCE & AWE
 • A MORAL MINDSET
 • HUMBLE ONESelf BEFORE GOD

10-29

MARRIAGE
 JUSTICE
 SPEECH
 CHARACTER

TEN SPEECHES FROM A FATHER TO A SON



APPLY WISDOM IN THE FEAR OF THE LORD

FOUR POEMS OF LADY WISDOM 1:20-33 | 3:13-20 | CH 8 | CH 9



PROVERBS ≠ GOOD ADVICE...
 PROVERBS = GOD'S INVITATION TO LEARN WISDOM FROM PREVIOUS GENERATIONS

PROVERBS = PROB



PROVERBS

WISDOM IN GOD'S WORLD

BIBLICAL WISDOM LITERATURE

• EXPLORING HOW TO LIVE WELL IN GOD'S WORLD

• WISDOM IS NOT...

LAW (THOU SHALT... OR THOU SHALT NOT...)
 PROPHECY (THUS SAITH THE LORD)

• WISDOM IS... THE ACCUMULATED INSIGHT OF GOD'S PEOPLE THROUGH GENERATIONS



HUNDREDS OF ANCIENT PROVERBS

GENEROSITY
 DEBT
 CHARACTER
 POVERTY
 WORK
 FAMILY
 FORGIVENESS



THE FEAR OF THE LORD
 PROLONGS YOUR LIFE,
 BUT THE YEARS OF THE
 WICKED ARE CUT SHORT
 (10:27)

TRAIN UP A CHILD IN
 THE WAY THEY SHOULD
 GO, AND WHEN THEY'RE
 OLD THEY WON'T TURN
 FROM IT (22:6)

30 AGUR

I AM A DROVE AND HAVE
 NO WISDOM (30:2-3)



MODEL KEEPER OF PROVERBS



31 LEMUEL

HERE'S WHAT
 MY MOTHER
 TAUGHT ME:
 • GUIDANCE FOR WISE LEADERSHIP
 (31:1-9)
 • ALTHOUGH POEM ABOUT THE
 WISE WOMAN (31:10-31)



HER HUSBAND



THE KING



HER CHILDREN



THE MERCHANTS

ABILITIES

FEAR OF
 GOD &
 DISHONESTY
 WISDOMS WILL
 POORLY

PROVERBS ≠ PROMISES



PROVERBS FOCUS ON

THE GENERAL RULE **OR** EXCEPTIONS



LIFE IS TOO COMPLEX FOR
 FORMULAS, WE NEED ALL
 THE WISDOM BOOKS TOGETHER

created by the Bible Project

1:1
THE WORDS OF COHELET, SON OF DAVID, KING OF JERUSALEM

HEBREW: ONE WHO GATHERS PEOPLE
'TEACHER'



DIFFERENT VIEWS ON AUTHORSHIP

- KING SOLOMON?
- ANOTHER DESCENDANT OF DAVID?
- ISRAELITE TEACHER USING A SOLOMON-LIKE PERSONA

KEY POINT: THE TEACHER IS DIFFERENT THAN THE AUTHOR


ANONYMOUS  **TEACHER**

ECCLES

HEVEL, HEVEL, EVER
HEBREW: VAPOR, SMOK
1 TEMPORARY, FLEETING



1:1
1:2
1:3-11 TIME



TIME WILL EVENTUALLY ERASE YOU, ME, AND ALL WE CARE ABOUT

THE TEACHER

CAREER

- STRESS
- AGE
- LEAVE IT BEHIND

PLEASURE

- MONDAY ALWAYS COMES

WEALTH
CAREER
STATUS
PLEASURE

WISDOM
FEAR THE LORD
(SEE 7:1)

HEVEL
NO GUARANTEES
ENIGMA

THE AUTHOR



ECCLIASTES

EVERYTHING IS UTTERLY HEVEL*

HEVEL → USED 38 TIMES

2 ENIGMA, PARADOX



THE AUTHOR'S BASIC GOAL

TO LET THE TEACHER DECONSTRUCT ALL THE WAYS WE FIND MEANING & PURPOSE APART FROM GOD



(1: 3 - 12:7)

HOW DO YOU LIVE LIFE IN THE MIDST OF HEVEL?

ACCEPT THAT ALL OF LIFE IS OUT OF YOUR CONTROL



FRIENDSHIP



FAMILY

THE GIFT OF GOD



GOOD MEAL



SUNNY DAY

11:7-12:7 DEATH



THE GREAT EQUALIZER

12:9-14

CONCLUSION & EVALUATION OF THE TEACHER



THE CONCLUSION: FEAR GOD AND KEEP HIS COMMANDS - THIS IS THE WHOLE DUTY OF HUMANS: FOR GOD WILL BRING EVERY DEED INTO JUDGMENT, EVERY HIDDEN THING, WHETHER GOOD OR EVIL (12: 13-14)

(1: 1, 12: 9-14)

created by the Bible Project

Book of Proverbs

Slides from Dr. Parke's Teachings

SLIDE 1

Old Testament Workshop
Morrison Heights Baptist Church
January 12, 2020

BOOK OF PROVERBS

SLIDE 2

KIND	FOCUS	EXAMPLES
Practical Wisdom	RULE of LIFE	Proverbs
Speculative Wisdom	EXCEPTIONS to the RULE	<i>Job</i> Ecclesiastes

Rule of Life: "No harm befalls the righteous, but the righteous, but the wicked are filled with trouble." (Pr. 12:21)

Exceptions:
Why do bad things happen to good people?
Why do the wicked prosper?
See Job and Ecclesiastes.

The Proverbs of **EVIL**

SLIDE 3

OVERVIEW

Proverbs is a COLLECTION of COLLECTIONS.


1:1-7	Introduction and Purpose
1:8-9:18	Discourses and Cautions
10:1-32:16	Proverbs of Solomon: First Collection
22:17-23:14	Sayings to the Wise: First Collection
23:15-24:22	More Discourses and Cautions
24:23-34	Sayings to the Wise: Second Collection
25:1-29:27	Proverbs of Solomon: Second Collection
30:1-33	Words of Agur
31:1-9	Words of Lemuel
31:10-31	Virtues of a Godly Woman

Book of Proverbs

Slides from Dr. Parke's Teachings

SLIDE 4

ROLE OF SOLOMON

 <small>PATRON Wisdom Literature</small>	X	Book of Job
	✓	Book of Proverbs (1-29)
	?	Book of Ecclesiastes
	✓	Song of Solomon

"[Solomon] also spoke 3,000 proverbs, and his songs were 1,005."
1 Kings 4:32

SLIDE 5

FORMAT

- Poetry
- Short/Two-Liners

EXAMPLES

LINE ONE: A soft answer turns away wrath,
LINE TWO: But a harsh word stirs up anger.

LINE ONE: The rich rules over the poor,
LINE TWO: And the borrower is the slave of the lender.

- Catchy

WHY? Easier to Remember

CAVEAT generally true, NOT guaranteed

SLIDE 6

METHODOLOGY

FOCUS: Creation Theology

HOW?
Observing humans and animals ("Field Study")
SEE the Statements in Proverbs.

"The heavens declare the glory of God, and the sky above proclaims His handiwork." (Ps. 19:1)

WHY?

- To discern the ORDER, "Cause and Effect"
- To minimize mystery

Objective: To Cope

Book of Proverbs

Slides from Dr. Parke's Teachings

SLIDE 7

KINDS OF MATERIAL

① **INSTRUCTION GENRE**
Commandments
Admonitions (e.g., 5:15-20)
Prohibitions (e.g., 3:27)
may begin with the words "My Son"
SEE 1:10, 13; 2:1; 3:1, 11, 21; 4:20; 8:1; 8:1, 20; 7:1.

② **WISDOM SENTENCE**
Statements/Observations of Life
predominant in chapters 10-29

"Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths." (Ps. 37:4)


SLIDE 8

KINDS OF MATERIAL

③ **NUMERICAL SAYING: X + (X + 1)**
predominant in chapter 30
"There are 30 things that the Lord hates, EVEN that one observation is His." (Ps. 15:1)

④ **ACROSTIC (31:10-31)**
"The Virtues of a Godly Woman" is twenty-two verses.
Each verse begins with a Hebrew letter in order.

Easier to Remember



Book of Ecclesiastes

Slides from Dr. Parke's Teachings

SLIDE 1

Old Testament Workshop
Morrison Heights Baptist Church
January 12, 2020

BOOK OF ECCLESIASTES

SLIDE 2

WISDOM LITERATURE

KIND	FOCUS	EXAMPLES
Practical Wisdom	RULE of LIFE	Proverbs
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Rule of Life "No harm befalls the righteous, but the righteous, but the wicked are filled with trouble." (Pr. 12:21)

Exceptions
Why do bad things happen to good people?
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SLIDE 3

TITLE

Ecclesiastes is a Greek name of a Hebrew book in our English Bibles. **GENESIS** **EXODUS** **DEUTERONOMY**

WHY?

The root of **Ecclesiastes** is **ecclesia**, a common noun translated "church," "congregation," "assembly," or "gathering." **Ecclesiastes** designates the group leader.

Ecclesiastes is the Greek equivalent of **Qahalath**, the book's title in the Hebrew Bible.

Wisdom Literature

Book of Job
Psalms 1, 19, 33, 36, 37, 39, 49, 73, 112, 127, 128, 133
Book of Proverbs
Book of Ecclesiastes
Song of Solomon--*according to the Jewish rabbis*

Definition

Wisdom is the ability to make godly choices in life.

[James Crenshaw, *Old Testament Wisdom*]

Biblical wisdom is defined as the ability to cope, the art of steering, practical knowledge of the laws of life and the world based upon experience, parents legacy to their children, quest for self-understanding, and mastery of the world.

“Wisdom” signifies a literary corpus; a particular attitude toward reality, a world-view; expresses itself with remarkable thematic coherence.

Wisdom is practical, the application of **knowledge** (facts), “know-how” (*savoir-faire*).

Origin

The roots of wisdom thought lie in creation theology. A person acquires wisdom not by receiving divine revelation but by recording observations about what works or fails to work in daily life in the world created by God: Trial-n-Error. Based on creation, wisdom provides an indirect, limited form of revelation. Its principles are tentative because they may be overruled by the mysterious freedom of God (e.g., Book of Job) or by the teaching of other direct revelation (e.g., prophecy and law).

Development

Clan -----> Royal Court -----> Theological

[Crenshaw]

Clan	goal to master life; purpose to understand nature and human relationships; forms included numerical saying; teachers were parents (see Proverbs 1:8)
Royal Court	not for everyone; secular, didactic; use of rhetorical questions, exhortation, and admonition; political training for princes--topics such as proper speech (e.g., Proverbs 15:1; 25:15) and table manners (Proverbs 23:1-3)
Theological	covered many subjects; education for everyone; communicated by dialogue, admonition, and warnings; distinctions being fear of the Lord, personification of wisdom and folly

Description

Acquiring wisdom is a human activity available to all.

“Fear of Yahweh” is obedience to the divine will; fear is not a term of emotion.

[Gerhard von Rad, *Wisdom in Israel*]

The motto of biblical wisdom is “fear Yahweh” (e.g., Proverbs 1:7; Job 28:28; Ecclesiastes 12:13).

“Fear” = reverence, awe, or respect that motivates, NOT a horror or terror that paralyzes

The urge to secure human existence through the use of reason is universal.

Wisdom was regarded as a human achievement, lacked divine backing.

Wisdom is both hidden and present.

[Crenshaw]

Significance of Orders for Correct Social Behavior

Community is the source of individual ethics.

Good promotes community AND individual life; there is nothing good which does not also do good (e.g., how to use the tongue; warning against pride).

[Rad]

The Essentials for Coping with Reality

The Expression of the Actual and the Search for Analogies—to understand man by noting peculiar behavior (e.g., Proverbs 21:19)

Cause and Effect

- implies an ORDER which can be discerned
- mastering of the contingent
- quest of ancient man to reduce the sphere of contingency
- Act—Consequence Relationship

not really a doctrine of retribution but more an order of life which can be experienced; established by Yahweh

[Rad]

fundamental order lay hidden in the universe—rational rule applied to nature and humans; enabled people to secure their existence; subject to God’s will

find order in nature -----> transfer to social setting of humans by analogy

[Crenshaw]

Strategy

Minimize the unknowns--*No one can know everything.*

Identify any exceptions.

Anticipate the “bumps” and “curves” along the road of life.

(Book of Proverbs describes **order**; Books of Job and Ecclesiastes address **exceptions**)