

OT Term2: Week 6 - Solomon's writings - Proverbs

Wisdom of Solomon

Book of Proverbs.

1:1 Title

1:1-7 Introduction - the design of Proverbs

2-6 The purpose of the proverbs

1. Wise men learn what wisdom is. This has the effect of meaning that as we read, if we are already wise, then we shall see the worth of what is being said. In this way the word spoken here as proverbial, has the power to confirm those wisdoms already in our hands. It has a confirmatory value as well as an instructional value.

7-9 The motto - an exhortation to fear God, and believe his word, because of the benefit to be derived from it

1. The fear of the Lord is an attitude of reverence and respect. It is a relational stance taken towards the Lord which will set the boundaries of what it is that we shall come to know and appreciate.

I. IN PRAISE OF WISDOM (1:8 - 9:18)

1:8-19 Warning to avoid the enticement of sinners

20-23 Personified Wisdom's cries in the streets and has a plea not to reject her counsel

*1. Here we are in a different setting to Ecclesiastes which is the subjective, private perceptions of the writer which are meant to lead us to consider what we see as well and then to find our duty in serving and obeying God.
2. Here, Solomon, Agur and Lemuel are not posing to us as our teachers. They are pointing us to God as Wisdom, both beyond us and also themselves. They are acknowledging that the real teacher of his people is God Himself – here, and elsewhere portrayed as a woman. She cries in the open air – her teaching is available to all.*

24 -33 The punishment that awaits those who refuse wisdom's counsels

2:1- 9 The benefits of searching for the treasure of wisdom

10-15 It will protect you from the wicked man

16-19 and from the snares of the adulteress

1. The discussion of the adulteress requires us to immerse ourselves in the ancient time when most or all men were married in the local context. The presence of a 'loose' woman – an unconnected woman – meant that there was a situation of temptation to the men of the town. They are instructed to understand what it is that they will lose if they go in to the adulteress – who has no more to lose than she has already lost.

20-22 and direct in righteous paths.

3:1-12 An exhortation to the son to obey, to trust the Lord, to remain humble, to honor the Lord and submit to His discipline.

13-26 The blessing of wisdom in all parts of life.

27-32 Act kindly to others.

33-35 The Lord's differing treatment of the wicked and the upright.

4:1-27 Encouragement to esteem wisdom and follow her ways.

5:1-14 Warning against adultery.

15-23 Drink from our own cistern - enjoy your wife.

6:1-5 Warnings against going surety;

6-11 against idleness

12-15 against the troublemaker.

OT Term2: Week 6 - Solomon's writings - Proverbs

16-19 Seven things the Lord hates.

20-35 Warning against adultery.

7:1-5 An encouragement to be familiar with wisdom.

6-27 The wiles of the adulteress with the naive fool.

8:1-21 Wisdom's call to listen for it is primary to knowledge, truth, riches etc..

22-31 Wisdom was with the Lord from the beginning.

1. Here we deal with important texts in the church's struggle with the heretics of the first 4 centuries of the Christian era.

2. Wisdom, seen as eternal and prior to the Creation asks that we think of Wisdom as residing within the inner counsels of the Godhead. Colossians will develop this as the expression of the 2nd Person of the Trinity – our Lord Jesus Christ. Paul will teach us that Christ is our wisdom from God.

32-36 The blessing of listening to its counsel.

9:1-18 Contrast of the products of wisdom and folly.

II. PROVERBS OF SOLOMON 10:1 - 22:16

1. It is very difficult to summarize these following chapters as almost every verse contains a different subject about various observations on moral virtue and their opposing vices and the living out of these.

2. Wisdom in every setting finds its meaning within the context in which we are placed. So we see described a vast range of situations: the fool, the king, parents, work, fairness in commerce, the tongue, the adulteress, husbands and wives, kindness.

III. WORDS OF WISE MEN 22:17 - 24:34

IV. FURTHER PROVERBS OF SOLOMON

HEZEKIAH'S COLLECTION 25:1 - 29:27

V. WORDS OF AGUR 30:1-33

VI. WORDS OF KING LEMUEL 31:1-9

1. It is Lemuel's mother who has taught him that, as a man, he is made to govern and as a king he should be all the more zealous to do so.

2. He should not deliver his manhood – and governance – over to women, and perhaps the local women in his court are the target of his mother's urgings.

3. He should keep his senses and accept that he will have to judge cases so that he needs to avoid drunkenness and other loss of control.

VII. DESCRIPTION OF A WORTHY WOMAN. 31:10-31

1. His mother also taught him to understand what a good wife was; she would be "good" to her husband.

2. His wife is an industrious person who is about the preservation of her household. She is perceptive and leads a very active life in commercial affairs, in which she is successful.

3. Although not a king, her husband is also a ruler in local government. This is what "in the gates" means; he is not idle but ruling. He is caring for the city; she, as his wife is caring for the household.

4. The picture presented here for us is one of relational glory. This woman is the glory of her husband, this is even recognised in the gates where he sits. He, on the other hand, has the capacity, as only a husband has, to glorify his wife. His praises of her are specific and careful, he has a full knowledge of what it is that she does.