



Proverbs

Jesus Christ, Our Wisdom

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The Book of Proverbs

The Hebrew title of Proverbs is *Mishlei Shlomo* – “The Proverbs of Solomon.”

The term for proverb is *mashal* which comes from a root meaning “parallel” or “similar,” and signifies “a description by way of comparison.”

F-L-I-G-H-T

F – Proverbs is attributed to 3 main authors: Solomon, Agur, and Lemuel. Little is known of Agur and Lemuel, but some think that Solomon either knew them personally or had access to their writings. Some even believe these were aliases for Solomon. Some proverbs are anonymous, going by the title “Sayings of the Wise.”

Solomon wrote his proverbs between 970 and 930 BC. Because we do not know about Agur and Lemuel, specific dates for their compositions can’t be determined. King Hezekiah compiled all the proverbs sometime between 729 and 686 BC.

F-L-I-G-H-T

L – The book of Proverbs is part of the Bible’s wisdom literature, along with Job and Ecclesiastes. It is one of the most read books of the Bible and one of the most practical. Proverbs is the greatest how-to book ever written, and those who have the good sense to take its lessons to heart will quickly discover wisdom on such topics as godliness, prosperity, and contentment.

F-L-I-G-H-T

- I – Preamble (1:1-7)
 - Extended Discourses on Wisdom (1:8-9:18)
 - Solomonic Proverbs (10:1-22:16; 25:1-29:27)
 - Sayings of the Wise (22:17-24:34)
 - Sayings of Agur (30)
 - Sayings of King Lemuel (31:1-9)
 - Poem to the Virtuous Woman (31:10-31)

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F-L-I-G-H-T

- G – In Proverbs 8, wisdom is personified and seen in its perfection. Paul referred to Jesus as “the wisdom of God” (1 Cor. 1:24). He also described Christ as the One “in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge” (Col. 2:3). Proverbs 11:4 also makes the bold statement that “righteousness delivers from death,” a truth that is fully expanded on in the NT as Christ’s righteousness on the cross.

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- G – In Proverbs 30:4, Agur wrote a clear reference to the sovereignty of God and his Son – another example of Christ as wisdom personified: *Who has ascended into heaven, or descended? Who has gathered the wind in His fists? Who has bound the waters in a garment? Who has established all the ends of the earth? What is his name, and what is his Son’s name, If you know?* Part of the life of Christ in the believer is the wisdom he gives us through the Holy Spirit and the Word to live righteously.

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F-L-I-G-H-T

- H – Much of the history surrounding the book of Proverbs revolves around Solomon. The Bible says that Solomon was the wisest man who ever lived and that he spoke 3000 proverbs (1 Kings 4:29-32). His reign was the time in Israel’s history when prosperity and intellectual sophistication were at their height (970-31 BC).

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F-L-I-G-H-T

T – A wise man or woman is always learning. They don't say, "Don't tell me; I already know these things." They are always open to increasing their knowledge, not content to stop learning. **Solomon's life is a cautionary tale: Practice what you preach.** Even though the Bible called him the wisest man who ever lived, he engaged in foolish behavior later in life. He built God's Temple but turned towards idolatry because he married 700 women and had 300 concubines who turned his heart from God. No wonder the Bible says, "Be doers of the Word and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves" (James 1:22).

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Wisdom

- **Hokma:** practical ability to apply theory to practice
- **Biyna:** ability to discern intellectually between truth and error
- **Tushiyya:** sound wisdom, efficient wisdom as an authentic intuition of the spiritual or psychological

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- **Cheerfulness** 15:13; 14:13; 15:15; 21:15; 29:18; 10:23; 12:25; 15:23; 13:12; 15:30; 27:9; 5:18; 17:21,25; 23:15-16,24-25;
- **Contentment** 16:19; 30:7-9; 25:16,27; 12:12; 13:11; 28:20; 21:25-26; 23:4-5; 5:15-20; 24:21-22; 27:18; 16:8; 23:17-18

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- **Decisions** 4:23; 21:2; 10:9; 11:3; 16:3; 4:26; 19:20; 15:14; 11:14; 12:15; 13:10,18; 15:22; 13:18; 18:17; 14:15-16; 27:23-24; 22:3; 24:27; 16:1,9; 21:1,30-31; 20:24; 19:21
- **Diligence** 22:29; 11:27; 21:5; 10:4; 12:24,27; 6:9-11; 19:24; 26:15; 22:13; 24:30-31

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- **Friendship** 16:7; 3:3-4; 27:10; 14:20-21; 3:27-28; 17:17; 19:6-7; 23:6-8; 25:17; 16:28; 13:20; 22:24-25; 27:17
- **Generosity** 10:22; 19:14; 18:22; 21:13; 28:8; 21:26; 31:20; 11:24-26; 13:22; 14:31a; 19:17; 22:9; 23:6; 28:22; 28:27

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- **Humility** 6:3; 16:19; 29:23; 25:6-7; 18:12; 15:33; 22:4; 8:13; 16:18; 11:2; 13:10; 21:24
- **Kindness** 3:3; 19:22; 31:26; 29:7; 12:10; 18:23; 15:1; 25:21-22

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- **Parenting** 3:11-12; 22:6; 13:22; 20:7; 14:1; 13:24; 22:15; 29:15; 23:13-14; 19:18; 23:24-25; 29:3,17; 1:8-9; 4:4; 19:13; 17:25; 28:7
- **Purity** 7:24-27; 23:26-28; 16:2; 21:2; 30:12,20; 21:8; 20:11; 22:11

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- **Righteousness** 2:9; 21:21; 8:8,15,20; 9:10; 12:17; 11:18-19; 11:5; 3:6; 16:8; 10:2; 16:13,31; 15:9; 21:3; 14:34; 16:12; 25:5; 31:8-9
- **Truthfulness** 6:16-19; 14:5; 8:7-8; 30:6; 23:23; 20:28; 29:14; 20:10; 20:23; 17:8; 3:28; 24:28; 25:18; 26:18-19; 27:5-6; 28:23; 25:14; 28:13; 12:13; 23:15-16; 12:22

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