

**An Introduction to the Old Testament**  
**Class 13**  
**Wisdom 2: Proverbs**  
**2025-2026**  
**Daniel Baker**

- I. Books of the Bible Quiz and Review Timeline**
- II. The Wisdom Literature in the Scheme of Salvation History**
  - A. Almost all centered around David and the monarchy
  - B. David developed the kingdom but also the worship of Israel (1 Chronicles).
- III. Author**
  - A. Solomon is the “author” (1:1) identified at the beginning and clearly the author of most of the book.
  - B. Remember Solomon’s prayer and God’s answer: 1 Kings 3:7–14, 28; 4:29–34
  - C. Yet...
    - 1. 24:23, “These also are sayings of the wise.”
    - 2. 30:1, “The words of Agur son of Jakeh”
    - 3. 31:1, “The words of King Lemuel”
  - D. Thus, even if Solomon is more a collector at times, he can still be called the “author.”
- IV. Outline**
  - A. (1:1-7) Introduction: Purpose of Proverbs
  - B. (1:8-9:18) An Overview of the Fear of the LORD
  - C. (10:1-22:16) The Proverbs of Solomon
  - D. (22:17-24:34) The Words of the Wise
  - E. (25-29) More Proverbs of Solomon
  - F. (30) Words of Agur (Agur is an unknown historical figure)
  - G. (31) Words of King Lemuel (Lemuel is an unknown historical figure)

## V. PURPOSE OF PROVERBS — Prov 1:1–7

In other words, Proverbs is written for you! “My son....” Is a phrase used 23 times. The perspective of the book is a father talking to his son.

## VI. CENTRAL THEME: “The fear of the LORD”

- A. The Fear of the LORD is the starting point and center of Proverbs.
- B. But this idea is not new with Proverbs. By the time Wisdom Literature written it is already firmly in the mind and heart of true faith. Listen to **Deuteronomy 10**:

“And now, Israel, what does the LORD your God require of you, but to **fear** the LORD your God, to walk in all his ways, to love him, to serve the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, 13 and to keep the commandments and statutes of the LORD, which I am commanding you today for your good? 14 Behold, to the LORD your God belong heaven and the heaven of heavens, the earth with all that is in it. 15 Yet the LORD set his heart in love on your fathers and chose their offspring after them, you above all peoples, as you are this day. 16 Circumcise therefore the foreskin of your heart, and be no longer stubborn. 17 For the LORD your God is God of gods and Lord of lords, the great, the mighty, and the **awesome** God, who is not partial and takes no bribe. 18 He executes justice for the fatherless and the widow, and loves the sojourner, giving him food and clothing. 19 Love the sojourner, therefore, for you were sojourners in the land of Egypt. 20 You shall **fear** the LORD your God. You shall serve him and hold fast to him, and by his name you shall swear. 21 He is your praise. He is your God, who has done for you these great and **terrifying** things that your eyes have seen. 22 Your fathers went down to Egypt seventy persons, and now the LORD your God has made you as numerous as the stars of heaven. (Deut 10:12–22)

- C. Solomon is part of that line of faith. He is simply developing “the fear of the LORD” into all aspects of life.
- D. Two verses so critical to understand, pillars for the whole book of Proverbs:

1:7, “The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge; Fools despise wisdom and instruction.”

9:10, “The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom, And the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding.”

- E. Fear of the LORD is NOT just “being afraid of God”—it doesn’t cause us to run away but draws us to him.

- F. Proverbs is giving us the picture of the life of someone who fears the LORD—not tips for success and good living.

## VII. INTERPRETING PROVERBS

- A. Basic Style is the Couplet in Hebrew Parallelism—Comparison is made, most of the time using a contrast:

A slack hand causes poverty,  
but the hand of the diligent makes rich. (Pro 10:4)

- B. At times pithy and short, but at times longer (31:10-31)

An excellent wife who can find?  
She is far more precious than jewels.  
11 The heart of her husband trusts in her,  
and he will have no lack of gain.  
12 She does him good, and not harm,  
all the days of her life.  
13 She seeks wool and flax,  
and works with willing hands... (Prov 31:10–13)

- C. Often gives different sides of a topic (15:16/22:4; 26:4-5)

Better is a little with the fear of the LORD than great treasure and trouble with it.  
(Prov 15:16)  
The reward for humility and fear of the LORD is riches and honor and life. (Prov 22:4)

Answer not a fool according to his folly, lest you be like him yourself.  
5 Answer a fool according to his folly, lest he be wise in his own eyes. (Prov 26:4–5)

## VIII. SOME TOPICS IN PROVERBS

- A. Diligence and laziness (6:6–11)

6 Go to the ant, O sluggard; consider her ways, and be wise.  
7 Without having any chief, officer, or ruler,  
8 she prepares her bread in summer and gathers her food in harvest.  
9 How long will you lie there, O sluggard? When will you arise from your sleep?  
10 A little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to rest,  
11 and poverty will come upon you like a robber, and want like an armed man.  
(Prov 6:6–11)

B. Friendship (3:27–28; 18:24)

27 Do not withhold good from those to whom it is due, when it is in your power to do it.

28 Do not say to your neighbor, “Go, and come again, tomorrow I will give it”—when you have it with you. (Prov 3:27–28)

A man of many companions may come to ruin, but there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother. (Prov 18:24)

C. Speech (10:19–21)

19 When words are many, transgression is not lacking, but whoever restrains his lips is prudent.

20 The tongue of the righteous is choice silver; the heart of the wicked is of little worth.

21 The lips of the righteous feed many, but fools die for lack of sense. (Prov 10:19–21)

D. Marriage (14:1; 18:22; 19:14; 31:10–13)

The wisest of women builds her house, but folly with her own hands tears it down. (Prov 14:1)

He who finds a wife finds a good thing and obtains favor from the LORD. (Prov 18:22)

House and wealth are inherited from fathers, but a prudent wife is from the LORD. (Prov 19:14)

An excellent wife who can find? She is far more precious than jewels.

11 The heart of her husband trusts in her, and he will have no lack of gain.

12 She does him good, and not harm, all the days of her life.

13 She seeks wool and flax, and works with willing hands. (Prov 31:10–13)

E. Child rearing (19:18; 22:6, 15; 29:15)

Discipline your son, for there is hope; do not set your heart on putting him to death. (Prov 19:18)

Train up a child in the way he should go; even when he is old he will not depart from it. (Prov 22:6)

Folly is bound up in the heart of a child, but the rod of discipline drives it far from him. (Prov 22:15)

The rod and reproof give wisdom, but a child left to himself brings shame to his mother. (Prov 29:15)

F. Domestic peace (15:17; 17:1)

Better is a dinner of herbs where love is than a fattened ox and hatred with it. (Prov 15:17)

Better is a dry morsel with quiet than a house full of feasting with strife. (Prov 17:1)

G. Justice (11:1)

A false balance is an abomination to the LORD, but a just weight is his delight. (Prov 11:1)

H. Getting along and good manners (23:1–2; 25:16–17; 26:17–19; 27:14)

1 When you sit down to eat with a ruler, observe carefully what is before you,  
2 and put a knife to your throat if you are given to appetite. (Prov 23:1–2)

16 If you have found honey, eat only enough for you, lest you have your fill of it and vomit it.

17 Let your foot be seldom in your neighbor's house, lest he have his fill of you and hate you. (Prov 25:16–17)

17 Whoever meddles in a quarrel not his own is like one who takes a passing dog by the ears.

18 Like a madman who throws firebrands, arrows, and death

19 is the man who deceives his neighbor and says, "I am only joking!" (Prov 26:17–19)

Whoever blesses his neighbor with a loud voice, rising early in the morning, will be counted as cursing. (Prov 27:14)

I. Attributes of God (15:3, 11; 16:1–2; 21:30-31)

The eyes of the LORD are in every place, keeping watch on the evil and the good. (Prov 15:3)

Sheol and Abaddon lie open before the LORD; how much more the hearts of the children of man! (Prov 15:11)

1 The plans of the heart belong to man, but the answer of the tongue is from the LORD.

2 All the ways of a man are pure in his own eyes, but the LORD weighs the spirit.  
(Prov 16:1–2)

30 No wisdom, no understanding, no counsel can avail against the LORD.  
31 The horse is made ready for the day of battle, but the victory belongs to the LORD. (Prov 21:30–31)

J. Perseverance and Humility (24:15–16)

15 Lie not in wait as a wicked man against the dwelling of the righteous; do no violence to his home;  
16 for the righteous falls seven times and rises again, but the wicked stumble in times of calamity. (Prov 24:15–16)

IX. **SOMETHING GREATER THAN SOLOMON... – Matt 12:42; Col 2:1-3**

The queen of the South will rise up at the judgment with this generation and condemn it, for she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon, and behold, **something greater than Solomon is here**. (Matt 12:42)

For I want you to know how great a struggle I have for you and for those at Laodicea and for all who have not seen me face to face, 2 that their hearts may be encouraged, being knit together in love, to reach all the riches of full assurance of understanding and the knowledge of God's mystery, which is Christ, 3 **in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge**. (Col 2:1–3)

X. **Final 3 classes: The Prophets!**