

Old Testament Introduction

The Book of Proverbs

Jerry Akers

INTRODUCTION

1) As Psalms is the worship and hymn book of the Old Testament, Proverbs is its _____ manual. The Book of Proverbs has been termed as a book of “laws from heaven for _____ on earth.” The Book of Proverbs is intended to do for our _____ life what the Book of Psalms is intended to do for our devotional life.

2) The Hebrew word for “proverb” means “parallel,” “similar,” or a “comparison.”

- Proverbs are concisely expressed principles about _____ and character in the spiritual, moral, and social realms.
- They are short sayings that convey a specific truth in a pointed, compact way.
- The Proverbs might be looked at as the “*holy common sense*” of the Old Testament.
- The divine origin of the Book of Proverbs is attested by the fact that after some 3000 years, its counsels still stand, undaunted by modern psychology and education.

3) Proverbs is the second of three books designated as _____ literature, the other two being Job and Ecclesiastes. Wisdom, as most often used in Proverbs, means something more than just mere knowledge. Knowledge is the comprehension of truth in one's mind, but wisdom is the _____ of truth to one's life. In the Book of Proverbs, this wisdom has a threefold basis:

- It is based on the authority and majesty of God—reverence for God (**1:7**)
- It recognizes the authority and sanctity of the home—respect for parents (**1:8**)
- It acknowledges the authority and moral standards of society—regard for the law (**1:10-19**)

AUTHORSHIP

1) **The Traditional view:** There is strong Scriptural testimony that Solomon was the author of the entire book except chapters 30 & 31 which were written by King Lemuel and Agur respectively. However, some hold that these two names may be

poetic references to Solomon himself. **1 Kings 4:32** ascribes

_____ proverbs to Solomon and **1 Kings 3:5-28** and **10:1** give notice of Solomon's fame for his divinely-imparted wisdom.

2) **The Critical view:** Critics say that the Book of Proverbs is a composite work consisting of at least eight different groupings. Some of these groupings were written anonymously and later attributed to Solomon. At least one of these groupings, **22:17-24:22**, are said to have been borrowed and adapted from an Egyptian writing titled *The Wisdom of Amen-emope*.

RECIPIENTS

- To the writer's son, presumably Reheboam **1:8; 2:1**
- The same teaching would apply to all children **4:1**
- In a broader sense, all of mankind **8:1-5**

DATE OF WRITING

Since they were written by Solomon, this would date the work about _____ B. C. The collection copied by Hezekiah's scribes was brought together about _____ B. C. (**25:1**)

PURPOSE OF BOOK

The overall purpose of the Book of Proverbs is to impart _____ (**1:2-4**). The Proverbs are not given to impart mere head knowledge, but to promote divinely enlightened understanding of what is good and evil. This divine wisdom is then to be applied in daily life.