

BIBLE READING FOR 2023

WEEK #32

PROVERBS

08-06-23

Monday - Proverbs 1-6

Wednesday - Proverbs 14-19

Friday - Proverbs 26-31

Tuesday - Proverbs 7-13

Thursday - Proverbs 20-25

Proverbs is the third book of poetry in the Old Testament. Hebrew poetry does not depend on meter or rhyme but on balance of thought. A chief component in accomplishing that balance of thought was Hebrew parallelism. This is most easily seen in the couplets that make up the majority of the Proverbs. Three types of parallelism found in this form of writing include synonymous (repeating), antithetical (contrasting) and synthetic (developing). In parallelism the first line of a verse makes a statement about a particular subject and the second line either says something similar, opposite or further developing what was said in the first line. The following gives an example of each of these:

- 1.) Synonymous – “The generous man will be prosperous,
And he who waters will himself be watered.” Proverbs 11:25
- 2.) Antithetical – “A good man will obtain favor from the Lord,
But he who hates reproof is stupid.” Proverbs 12:2
- 3.) Synthetic – “Like vinegar to the teeth and smoke to the eyes,
So is the lazy one to those who send him.” Proverbs 10:26

The word proverb comes from the Hebrew word *mashal*. A common definition for a proverb is a short but powerful statement containing the wisdom of experience in life. Some synonyms would be a motto, saying, truism or axiom. *Mashal* can also be translated to mean a parable or an allegory.

The purpose of the book is stated in the first seven verses of the first chapter. We might summarize what is there by saying the goal of Proverbs is to impart knowledge, understanding and wisdom so that a person can conduct himself with discretion and prudence while living a righteous life before God.

The author of Proverbs is not a single person but involves numerous individuals. Solomon wrote the majority of the proverbs and is probably most often associated with this book but two other men that we know by name that contributed were Agur and King Lemuel. Some additional authors were vaguely referred to as “the wise.” We do not know for sure when these various writings were compiled into the form that we have them now. However, since we are aware that some of Solomon’s proverbs were transcribed by King Hezekiah’s men around 700 B.C. we know it would have to be sometime after that period.

An outline for Proverbs: 1.) Wisdom personified 1-9
2.) Proverbs on various subjects 10-30
3.) The worthy woman 31

Questions for Proverbs 1-31:

- 1.) In 4:5, what two things does it say should be acquired?
- 2.) How is the person who allows himself to be seduced by a harlot described in the first part of 7:22?
- 3.) According to 13:3, what will happen to the person who guards his mouth and in contrast to that what will be the fate of the one who speaks too freely?
- 4.) What will a man's discretion do for him in 19:11?
- 5.) We are given what warning about fools in 26:4?

Answers to questions for Week #29 – Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians and Colossians:

- 1.) Hypocrisy.
- 2.) Their tutor, to lead them to Christ.
- 3.) His insight into the mystery of Christ.
- 4.) Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.
- 5.) Philosophies of the world and traditions of men