

A LOOK AT THE BOOK PROVERBS

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AUTHOR

The majority was written by Solomon (971-31 B.C.) who received special wisdom from God to apply to the task, as noted in 1 Ki. 4:32-34.

The majority of his proverbs have not been preserved (only 800 out of 3000).

Part of the book is credited to other wise men who are not identified (22:17-24:34).

The last two chapters were written by Agur and by King Lemuel, neither of whom are identified elsewhere.

DATE

Since most of the proverbs came from the pen of Solomon, they would have been written during his reign (971-31).

The dates of the other writers are unknown.

Although no final date is identifiable with certainty, the compilation of some of the proverbs during the reign of Hezekiah (about 700 B.C.) gives the earliest date possible for its completion (25:1).

The final collection may have been written shortly thereafter.

BACKGROUND

The only clearly defined historical context for these dateless, universal teachings is that of the early years of Solomon's reign.

Recognizing the enormity of his responsibility as king over God's people at the height of their historical development, Solomon asked God for help (1 Kings 3-4).

When offered a choice of anything he wanted, Solomon chose wisdom over everything else. God granted him his request and gave him many other blessings as well.

Solomon's wisdom became known around the world.

Only a small portion of it is recorded in the book.

He spoke 3000 proverbs, of which less than 800 are recorded.

Other wise men added to those teachings.

Proverbs is the result of the compilation

PURPOSE

That the reader might give first priority in his life to the search for wisdom.

The purpose is to change our lives and help us enjoy living.

MESSAGE

Proverbs is a counselor's guide which seeks to apply God's wisdom to the details of daily living. Its emphasis is practical.

It provides God's children with a road map to indicate how they can best go through life and enjoy their relationships with others.

ORGANIZATION

I. Exhortation to seek wisdom before anything else 1-9
Solomon took that course and recommends it to everyone.

II. Collections of proverbs which provide specific counsel regarding life 10-31

PROVERBS

Wisdom for Living

Ralph Porter

Exhortation to Seek Wisdom	1-9	Collections of Proverbs with Specific Counsel	10-31
Prologue	1:1-7	First collection of proverbs by Solomon	10-22:16
Author	1:1	Contrast of wise and foolish lifestyles	10-15
Purpose	1:2-6	Counsel concerning wise lifestyles	16-22:16
Theme	1:7		
Exhortation	1:8-9:18		
Warning to avoid evil companions	1:8-19		
Warning to accept wisdom	1:20-23		
Basis for finding wisdom	2:1-8		
Conditions for wisdom	2:1-5	Collections of sayings from wise men	22:17-24:34
Source for wisdom	2:6-8	First collection	22:17-24:22
Benefits of wisdom	2:9-3:12	Second collection	24:23-34
Protection	2:9-22		
Long life and prosperity	3:1-2		
Favor with God and man	3:3-4		
Guidance	3:5-6		
Healthy life	3:7-8		
Material prosperity	3:9-10		
God's love and pleasure	3:11-12	Second collection of proverbs by Solomon	25-29
Value of wisdom	3:13-26		
Practice of wisdom	3:27-36		
Teaching of wisdom	4	Sayings of Agur	30
A father's counsel	4:1-10		
Two alternatives	4:11-19		
Importance of untarnished life	4:20-27		
Warnings of wisdom	5-7	Sayings of Lemuel	31
Concerning marital faithfulness	5:1-23		
Concerning cosigning loans	6:1-5		
Concerning laziness	6:6-11	An oracle from his mother	31:1-9
Concerning deceptive dealings	6:12-19		
Concerning adultery	6:20-35		
Concerning prostitution	7:1-27	A wife of noble character	31:10-31
Invitation from wisdom	8		
Two competing invitations	9		
An invitation from wisdom	9:1-12		
An invitation from folly	9:13-18		