

Purpose

To apply divine wisdom to daily life and to provide moral instruction

Penmen

Solomon wrote most of this book, with Agur and Lemuel contributing some sections

Date Written

Solomon wrote and compiled most of these proverbs early in his reign

Setting

This is a book of wise sayings, a textbook for teaching people how to live godly lives through the repetition of wise thoughts

Key Verse

“Fear of the Lord is beginning of knowledge. Only fools despise wisdom and knowledge.”

Proverbs 1:7

Special Features

This book uses varied literary forms: poems, brief parables, pointed questions, and couplets. Other literary devices include antithesis, comparison, parallelism, and personification.

An Overview (31 Chapters)

- Wisdom for Young People (*1:1-9:18*)
- Wisdom for All People (*10:1-24:34*)
- Wisdom for the Leaders (*25:1-31:31*)

Major Themes

- *Wisdom:* God wants His people to be wise. When we choose God’s way, He grants us wisdom. His Word, the Bible, leads us to live right, have right relationships, and make right decisions. It is the fool who ignores God.
- *Relationships:* This book gives us advice for developing our relationships with friends, family members, and co-workers. To relate to people, we need consistency, tact, and discipline to use the wisdom God gives us. If we don’t treat others according to the wisdom God gives, our relationships will suffer.
- *Speech:* What we say shows our real attitude towards others. How we talk reveals what we’re really like. Our speech is a test of how wise we have become. To be wise in our speech we need to use self-control. Our words should be honest and well-chosen.
- *Work:* God controls the final outcome of all we do. We are accountable to carry out our work with diligence, not laziness. Because God evaluates how we live, we should work purposefully.
- *Success:* God views success as having a good reputation, moral character, and the spiritual devotion to obey Him. A successful relationship with God counts for eternity. Everything else is perishable. All our resources, time, and talents come from God. We should strive to use them wisely.