

Lecture 18 – Proverbs, I

The proverbs of Solomon son of David, king of Israel:

*For attaining wisdom and discipline;
 For understanding words of insight;
 For acquiring a disciplined and prudent life,
 Doing what is right and just and fair;
 For giving prudence to the simple,
 Knowledge and discretion to the young –
 Let the wise listen and add to their learning,
 And let the discerning get guidance –
 For understanding proverbs and parables,
 The sayings and riddles of the wise.
 The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge,
 but fools despise wisdom and discipline. Proverbs 1:1-7*

Key Terms

Organization, authorship, structure, content, first principle, home, justice, limitations, illness, wealth

Lecture Objectives

- *Identify and outline the basic structure of Proverbs.
- *Identify, describe, and locate key themes addressed in Proverbs.
- *Identify key uses of the Proverbs for godly living, counsel, and service.

Preliminary Questions

- *What are some proverbs that have meant a lot to your personal walk and service? Where are they in Proverbs? How does their relative location within Proverbs shed light upon your understanding of them?

Book Recommendation: Cry of the Soul, Dan Allender & Tremper Longman

Proverbs, I

I. Proverbs

A. Introduction

1. Organized?
2. Robert Alden - medicine, vitamin
3. Multi-vitamin

B. Authorship

1. Solomon (with Hezekiah as later compiler)
 - a. 1 Kings 4:32 (3,000 proverbs)
2. Agur
3. King Lemuel
4. Possibly others not mentioned

C. Structure and content

1. Prov. 1:1 “The proverbs of Solomon son of David, king of Israel:”
2. 1:1-7 Title, purpose and first principle
 - a. Kidner, “Title & purpose apply to whole book, not just this section..”
 - b. ‘Comprehensive set of intellectual & moral qualities’
 - c. Pr. 9:10 / Ps. 111:10
 - d. Formation of the complete person “pious and wise”

- e. Raymond C. Van Leeuwen, "Proverbs" in A Complete Literary Guide to the Bible, ed. Ryken & Longman.
 - f. Faith is not opposed to reason, but constitutes its possibility, its connection to reality.
 - g. Life is not static, but a journey whose end is found in its beginning.
3. 1:8-9:end Fatherly exhortations to embrace wisdom rather than folly
- a. Themes in first 9 chapters - repeated throughout the book:
 - 1) Wisdom begins in the home
 - 2) Causative justice Pr. 2:21ff; Pr. 3:33-35
 - 3) Limitations of human understanding Pr. 3:5-6; Pr. 22:19, Pr. 30:1-6
 - 4) Psychosematic illness Pr. 4:20ff; Pr. 3:5; Pr. 15:30; Pr. 16:24; Pr. 17:22; Pr. 18:14

How does the metaphor of a 'multi-vitamin' help your understanding of Proverbs? Can you think of other metaphors that work well to explain the Proverbs?

What do you make of the Ancient Near East parallels you had to read? Do they discredit the veracity of Scripture or strengthen it? Why? What is similar about biblical wisdom and Ancient Near East wisdom? What is different about the two?