

Key to PROVERBS

1. STATISTICS:

The word "proverb" means a short, pithy, axiomatic saying, particularly appropriate for oral teaching. Writers, Solomon (1:1); Agur (30:1), a personal friend of Solomon; King Lemuel (31:1), thought to be another name for Solomon. Key thought, value of wisdom; key verse, 9:10; time of writing covers about 300 years (25:1).

2. THEME:

Solomon was the wisest man the earth has ever produced (I Kings 3:12). In a day when comparatively few could read and write, the teaching, secular and sacred, was largely by the "proverbial" method, "**precept upon precept; line upon line**" (Isaiah 28:10). Solomon's wisdom was really GOD's and these sayings profitably fit into life in whatever age they are used.

3. OUTLINE:

Wisdom especially for young (1-9)
Various subjects for all (10-24)
Hezekiah's collection (25-29)
Added by Agur and Lemuel (30, 31)

4. SPECIAL CHARACTERISTICS:

What Psalms is to the devotional life, Proverbs is to the practical life. Here is concentrated common sense.

In its method of teaching, Proverbs is closely related to the Sermon on the Mount and the Epistle of James.

Some proverbs were based on actual experiences, such as 1:7; 4:14.

5. OUTSTANDING TEACHINGS:

Underlying emphasis is that true wisdom comes from fear of (reverence for) the LORD.

The law of GOD given in the Pentateuch is supported by the admonitions of Proverbs. Wisdom is always GOD's way.

Many other subjects are dealt with: chastity, proper use of riches, consideration for the poor, control of the tongue, honesty, justice, humanity, cheerfulness, common sense.

6. INTERESTING FEATURES:

Perhaps greatest of all proverbs is 3:5, 6. Excellent life verse. Writer shows real knowledge of

nature: ants, spiders, conies. Respect for parents a subject most proverbs concerned with.

7. KEY TO UNDERSTANDING:

In the structure of Proverbs, GOD recognizes the ability and limitation of the human mind. Here are mottoes for life, short and easily remembered.

~ end of Proverbs ~

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