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## THE PROVERBS

The apostle James might have had Solomon in mind when he wrote, "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally..." (James 1:5) Solomon asked and God did indeed give liberally; He gave Solomon wisdom "as measureless as the sand on the seashore"! (I Kings 4:29, N.I.V.)

Solomon imparted much of his wisdom in the form of short, two-lined, easy-to-remember sentences called proverbs. These proverbs have been recorded and included in the book of the Proverbs for our benefit and admonition.

Although Solomon is the principal author (Chapters 1-29--see 1:1, 10:1, 25:1), other contributors are Agur, who wrote Chapter 30, and Lemuel, who shared his mother's teaching in Chapter 31. The proverbs of Solomon in Chapters 25-29 were collected and copied later by the men of King Hezekiah of Judah (25:1). Although several authors, collectors and copiers were involved in the creation of Proverbs, the Holy Spirit was the inspiration and master editor of the entire book.

The Bible only mentions Agur, Lemuel and the men of Hezekiah in one brief instance, but the life of Solomon, the son of David, is given a place of prominence. Read about the reign of Solomon in I Kings 3; 4:20-34, 10:23, 24 and answer the following ten questions.

1. Write out Solomon's request in 3:9. Give thy servant and understanding heart to judge they people. that I may good from evil, for who can judge such a great people  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. What was God's response to Solomon's request? 3:10 the speech pleased the Lord  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. For what other three things could Solomon have asked? 3:11 long life; riches for thyself, the life of thine enemies  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. In answer to his request, God gave Solomon a wise and an understanding heart. 3:12
5. What else did God give Solomon? 3:13 \_\_\_\_\_
6. What did all Israel recognize in Solomon that caused them to fear him? 3:28 I have also given thee that which thou hast not asked, both riches, and honour  
\_\_\_\_\_
7. Whose wisdom did Solomon's excel? 4:30 God gave Solomon wisdom and understanding exceeding much, and largeness of heart, Solomon's wisdom excelled the wisdom of all the children of the east country, and all the wisdom of Egypt  
\_\_\_\_\_
8. Was any man wiser than Solomon? 4:31 he was wiser than all men
9. How many proverbs did he speak? 4:32 he spake three thousand proverbs
10. Who sought Solomon to hear his wisdom? 10:24 all the earth sought to Solomon  
Please answer the next three questions from I Kings 10:1-10.
11. Why did the Queen of Sheba go to see Solomon? v. 1 to prove him with hard questions.  
\_\_\_\_\_
12. After Solomon answered all her questions and showed her his kingdom, what did the Queen of Sheba say of the report she had heard in her own land? v. 6 It was a true report that I heard in mine own land of thy acts and of thy wisdom

13. What was the Queen's initial reaction to the report, and what was her final conclusion about Solomon? v. 7 I believed not the words, until I came, and mine eyes had seen it: and, behold, the half was not told me: thy wisdom and prosperity exceedeth the fame which I heard
14. Jesus Christ recognized the greatness of Solomon (Matthew 6:29 and Luke 12:27), but what did He say of Himself in Luke 11:31? behold, a greater than Solomon is here.

Many Israelites proved Jesus with hard questions, but unlike the Queen of Sheba, they did not admit to His greatness nor give Him the honor He deserved.

God was exceedingly and abundantly gracious to Solomon. His peaceful and prosperous reign allowed him time to exercise the gift of wisdom God had given, the fruit of which has been passed on to us in the Proverbs.

## PART I: CHAPTERS 1-9, THE INTRODUCTION

The first nine chapters of Proverbs were written by Solomon as an introduction to his main body of proverbs in Chapters 10-29. These first chapters contain a strong exhortation about the pursuit of wisdom and the avoidance of evil.

### CHAPTER 1 - READ THE CHAPTER FIRST

1. What five purposes in verses 2-4 did Solomon give as the basis for sharing his proverbs? To know wisdom and instruction; to perceive the words of understanding; 3 To receive the instruction of wisdom, justice, and judgment, and equity; 4 To give subtilty to the simple, to the young man knowledge and discretion.
2. Who will hear (give heed to) these proverbs in order to increase his learning? v. 5 A wise man will hear, and will increase learning; and a man of understanding shall attain unto wise counsels:
3. According to verse 6, the wise man who gives heed will also learn to understand a proverb and the interpretation
4. What is the "beginning" or the initial precept that must be learned in order to gain knowledge? v.7 The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge

The phrase "fear of the Lord" is mentioned 14 times in the Proverbs. This phrase means an exceeding, dreadful, and reverential fear of God for who He is. Such fear does not deny us an affectionate, loving relationship with God. This proverb simply teaches that without a true fear of the Lord, wisdom cannot be attained.

5. Who despises wisdom and instruction? v. 7 fools despise wisdom and instruction.
6. What advice is given in verses 10 and 15? if sinners entice thee, consent thou not. My son, walk not thou in the way with them; refrain thy foot from their path:
7. Those who seek gain by robbing and doing harm to others are only injuring themselves. They actually lay wait for their own blood, and they lurk privily for their own lives. v. 18

God has provided an alternative to the certain death that sin brings. The way of salvation is woven into every book of the Bible. In Proverbs, **wisdom** leads the way to salvation. Throughout the introduction, wisdom is personified as a woman.

8. From verses 20 and 21, list five places where wisdom cries and utters her voice. \_\_\_\_\_  
Wisdom crieth without; she uttereth her voice in the streets:  
21 She crieth in the chief place of concourse, in the openings of the gates: in the city she uttereth her words, saying,
9. According to Mark 16:15, where is the gospel to be preached? Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.
10. If we turn to wisdom, what two things does she say she will do? v. 23 \_\_\_\_\_  
I will pour out my spirit unto you, I will make known my words unto you
11. What is the result to those who reject the counsel and reproof of wisdom? v. 28 \_\_\_\_\_  
they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me:
12. What choice determined the destiny of those who rejected wisdom? v.29b \_\_\_\_\_  
and did not choose the fear of the Lord:
13. What is the promise to those who hearken to wisdom? v. 33 \_\_\_\_\_  
shall dwell safely, and shall be quiet from fear of evil.

## CHAPTER 2 - READ THE CHAPTER FIRST

In verses 1-4, we are presented with the diligent and wholehearted search that is prerequisite to finding wisdom. See Hebrews 11:6.

1. What does this search involve? List eight actions from verses 1-4. \_\_\_\_\_  
if thou wilt receive my words, and hide my commandments with thee; So that thou incline thine ear unto wisdom, and apply thine heart to understanding; Yea, if thou criest after knowledge, and liftest up thy voice for understanding;  
4 If thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasures
2. What is the reward of this diligent search? v. 5 \_\_\_\_\_  
Then shalt thou understand the fear of the Lord, and find the knowledge of God.
3. In addition, what six things are discovered about God? vv. 6-8 \_\_\_\_\_  
the Lord giveth wisdom: out of his mouth cometh knowledge and understanding. He layeth up sound wisdom for the righteous: he is a buckler to them that walk uprightly. He keepeth the paths of judgment, and preserveth the way of his saints.
4. When wisdom enters our hearts, and knowledge is pleasant to our souls, from what are we delivered? vv. 12a, 16 \_\_\_\_\_  
from the way of the evil man, from the man that speaketh froward things;  
from the strange woman, even from the stranger which flattereth with her words

5. The way of the evil man leads through the wide gate to destruction. Matt.7:13

6. To where does the way of the good man lead? Matt. 7:14 leadeth unto life

In Proverbs 2:16, we are introduced to wisdom's opposite, the strange woman. She is also known as the adulteress, the foolish woman, and the evil woman. She stands for everything that is against God. She draws man away from God and leads him to eternal destruction. The strange woman is the enemy of man's soul, the spirit of Satan in the world.

God and Satan have been in competition for souls since the fall of man. God's wisdom and Satan's strange woman both have a voice; man chooses whom he will hear and follow.

7. What does the strange woman do with her words? v. 16 flattereth with her words

8. What happens to those who follow the strange woman? v. 19 None that go unto her return again, neither take they hold of the paths of life

### CHAPTER 3 - READ THE CHAPTER FIRST

Choosing God's way of salvation not only delivers us from the strange woman and resulting destruction, it also gives us the opportunity to receive many benefits.

1. When we keep God's commandments, For length of days,  
and long life, and peace will be added to us. vv.1,2

2. If we bind mercy and truth about our necks, and write them upon our hearts, what will we find?  
vv. 3,4 favour and good understanding in the sight of God and man.

3. What can we do to insure that God will direct our paths? vv. 5,6 Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him,

4. If we honor God with our substance (offerings) and the first fruits of all our increase (tithes), then shall shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine.  
vv. 9,10

5. What are two less popular benefits from the Lord? v. 11 the chastening of the Lord and his correction:

6. We can find great consolation in knowing that whom the Lord loveth  
He corrects. v. 12

7. According to verses 13 and 18, Happy is the man that finds and retains wisdom.

As we **keep** sound wisdom and discretion (verse 21), we can expect the further benefits of safe travel (verse 23), peaceful sleep (verse 24), exclusion from God's wrath (verse 25), and confidence in God's protection (verse 26).

Right conduct toward others as exemplified in verses 27-30 should be a natural outflow of our thankfulness for God's bountiful provision.

8. Verse 31 tells us not to envy the oppressor nor his seeming prosperity. Why? v. 33 The curse of the Lord is in the house of the wicked: but he blesseth the habitation of the just

## CHAPTER 4 - READ THE CHAPTER FIRST

Solomon began this chapter (verses 1-4) as a father speaking lovingly and earnestly to his children. He realized the importance of teaching others, even as his father, the godly King David, had taught him (verse 4).

Spiritual heritage is passed down from generation to generation. Every Christian should feel a strong responsibility to be a solid link between the generations within the body of Christ. The responsibility of each Christian is to learn from the elders and to teach those younger in the Lord. Read Ephesians 6:4, II Timothy 2:2, and Titus 2:3,4.

1. The burden upon Solomon's heart and his cry to succeeding generations, repeated in verses 5 and 7, was Get wisdom, get understanding

2. Get wisdom. Get wisdom! Why? v. 7 Wisdom is the principal thing

The New International Version translates Proverbs 4:7 as, "Wisdom is supreme: therefore get wisdom. Though it cost all you have...."

3. What did the merchant do when he found the one pearl of great price? Matt. 13:46 went and sold all that he had, and bought it.

Wisdom is **supreme**. The acquisition of wisdom, of true knowledge, must overshadow all other accomplishments, desires, goals, and ambitions.

4. Write out Philippians 3:8. doubtless, I count all things as loss for the excellency of the knowledge of my Lord Jesus Christ  
Of whom I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as dung that I might win Jesus Christ

The knowledge of Christ is the greatest goal. **CHRIST** is supreme! Before the fullness of time came when Christ should be revealed, He was hidden in the Old Testament, seen mostly through innumerable types, shadows and prophecies. In Proverbs, wisdom, which is personified as a woman, foreshadows our precious Saviour.

In the New Testament, Christ is declared to be "the wisdom of God" (I Corinthians 1:24). Christ is the wisdom of God made manifest in the flesh. In Proverbs, Solomon cried earnestly, "Hear wisdom!" Centuries later, God Himself cried out from heaven, "This is my beloved Son: hear Him" (Mark 9:7).

5. Once wisdom is heard and received, what four things can be done to maintain her presence? vv. 6,8 Forsake her not, and she shall preserve thee: love her, and she shall keep thee.  
Exalt her, and she shall promote thee: she shall bring thee to honour, when thou dost embrace her.

As we are faithful to Christ, embracing Him, loving and exalting Him, truly He will preserve us and raise us to the greatest honor. We will be brought into communion with Him as we hear the words He spoke in Matthew 25:21, "Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

6. What will wisdom give? v. 9 She shall give to thine head an ornament of grace: a crown of glory shall she deliver to thee.

The remaining verses in Chapter 4 contrast the paths of the wicked with the righteous (verses 10-19) and give instruction on how to stay on the righteous path (verses 20-27).

7. Describe the path of the just. v. 18 \_\_\_\_\_  
 he path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.
8. Describe the way of the wicked. v. 19 \_\_\_\_\_  
 The way of the wicked is as darkness: they know not at what they stumble.
9. From verses 23-27, choose two suggestions that you feel are particularly helpful for a person trying to stay on the path of righteousness. \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life.  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 Turn not to the right hand nor to the left: remove thy foot from evil.

## CHAPTER 5 - READ THE CHAPTER FIRST

Chapter 5 demonstrates that consistent, sound teaching is necessary to keep believers from being drawn aside by the deception of the enemy.

1. Describe the lips and mouth of the strange woman. v. 3 \_\_\_\_\_  
 lips of a strange woman drop as an honeycomb, and her mouth is smoother than oil:
2. In his letter to the Colossians, Paul strove to teach the truth of the gospel lest \_\_\_\_\_  
 lest any man should beguile you with enticing words \_\_\_\_\_ . Col. 2:4
3. Many things may **seem** to be right and worthy of acceptance, but of what four things does Paul warn us to beware in Colossians 2:8? \_\_\_\_\_  
 philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ.
4. Where do the footsteps of the strange woman lead? v. 5 \_\_\_\_\_  
 down to death; her steps take hold on hell
5. In the face of sound teaching and explicit warnings, what would be the reasons for failure? Read verses 7-14 and answer from verses 12 and 13. \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 How have I hated instruction, and my heart despised reproof;  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 13 And have not obeyed the voice of my teachers, nor inclined mine ear to them that instructed me!

Verses 15-21 contain an exhortation to fidelity within marriage. This instruction applies just as strongly to the union between God and His people.

6. God was understandably jealous and angry with the nation of Israel when she forsook Him to go after strange gods. According to Jeremiah 2:13, what did Israel forsake when she forsook Jehovah God? \_\_\_\_\_  
 they have forsaken me the fountain of living waters
7. What did they use as a poor substitute for the divine waters? Jeremiah 2:13 \_\_\_\_\_  
 broken cisterns, that can hold no water.

The people of Israel had the Source, the great I AM, in their midst. Yet, they chose to serve strange gods who could do nothing for them.

Our well, our Source, is Jesus Christ. "In Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily, and ye are complete in him..." (Colossians 2:9,10). To search for fulfillment outside of Christ and His all-encompassing provision is foolishness.

8. A fitting question is asked in Proverbs 5:20. Please write it out. \_\_\_\_\_  
 why wilt thou, my son, be ravished with a strange woman, and embrace the bosom of a stranger?
9. Again, in the face of instruction, how will a man go astray? v. 23 \_\_\_\_\_  
 He shall die without instruction; and in the greatness of his folly he shall go astray.

## CHAPTER 6 - READ THE CHAPTER FIRST

Chapter 6 lists many of the pitfalls which can snare a person who is not walking in wisdom's perfect way: indebtedness (verses 1-5), lethargy and sloth (verses 6-11), corrupt and wicked communication (verses 12-15), abominable sins (verses 16-19), and adultery (verses 20-35).

Read Proverbs 11:15, 17:18, 22:26, and then reread 6:1-5.

1. What is the advice of Solomon to one who has made himself surety for another's debts? v. 5  
 Deliver thyself as a roe from the hand of the hunter, and as a bird from the hand of the fowler. by watching your mouth and being  
 Humble, or just don't do it.

In other words, try to get out of it! A man may have noble and kind intentions in standing behind a friend and guaranteeing his debt, but Solomon considered such an arrangement hazardous. If the friend could not pay, according to Old Testament law, the one who placed himself as surety could lose everything, including his family (to bond slavery).

2. In spite of the great cost, there was a man who made a "surety" commitment. Who was he and what did it cost him for the debt his friends could not pay? Romans 5:6-8 \_\_\_\_\_  
 Jesus who died for us.

3. What advice did Jesus receive in Matthew 27:39,40? \_\_\_\_\_  
 save thyself. If thou be the Son of God

Jesus remained on the cross for our sakes. Jesus was the only man worthy and able to pay the supreme price for the redemption of man's sinful soul. Aren't you glad Jesus made such a commitment?

4. What shall come upon the sluggard who prefers slumber to hard work? v. 11 poverty come as one that travelleth

In the material realm, slothfulness results in poverty. Similarly, slothfulness in the service of God results in **spiritual** poverty. The Christian who neglects the calls and urgings of the Holy Spirit to serve God will come to spiritual poverty and want. The Amplified Version describes this poverty as coming "with slow but surely approaching steps" and this want "as an armed man making you helpless."

5. What does a naughty and wicked person walk with? v. 12 walketh with a froward mouth.  
 A froward mouth is perverse and corrupt, one that is turned away from what is right and good.

6. What does this frowardness sow? v. 14 he deviseth mischief continually; he soweth discord.

7. Sowing discord among the brethren is listed as one of seven sins that God hates and finds abominable. From verses 16-19, list the other six sins. A proud look, a lying tongue,  
and hands that shed innocent blood,<sup>18</sup> An heart that deviseth wicked imaginations, feet that be swift in running to mischief,  
<sup>19</sup> A false witness that speaketh lies, and he that soweth discord among brethren.

8. What three things will God's word do if it is continually upon the heart (directing the conscience) and tied around the neck (directing the speech)? vv. 20-22 \_\_\_\_\_  
 When thou goest, it shall lead thee; when thou sleepest, it shall keep thee; and when thou awakest, it shall talk with thee.

God's Word not only guides and preserves, it also provides companionship, for "it shall talk with thee." What a wonderful promise, especially to the lonely soul!

9. What are the reproofs of instruction? v. 23 \_\_\_\_\_ the way of life:  
 10. The purpose of God's Word and His reproofs is to keep us from \_\_\_\_\_ the evil woman,  
 from the flattery of the tongue of \_\_\_\_\_ a strange woman. v. 24  
 11. Destruction of the human soul is Satan's evil intent. According to verse 26, what does the adulteress hunt for? \_\_\_\_\_ will hunt for the precious life.  
 12. An apprehended thief, although required to restore sevenfold, is not despised by men if \_\_\_\_\_  
 if he steal to satisfy his soul when he is hungry; \_\_\_\_\_ . v. 30  
 13. But what will the adulterer get, and what will not be wiped away? vv. 32,33 \_\_\_\_\_ he that doeth it destroyeth  
 his own soul. A wound and dishonour shall he get; and his reproach shall not be wiped away.

Our recollection of David as the sweet psalmist of Israel, the Goliath-slayer, and the man after God's own heart are clouded by the thought of David in his adulterous sin with Bathsheba. Although forgiven, cleansed, and even honored by God, David received a grievous wound. Dishonor and a haunting reproach marred his earthly life. Oh, that David had not strayed, had not let the commandment of God slip away from his heart!

## CHAPTER 7 - READ THE CHAPTER FIRST

1. The same important exhortation given in Chapter 6:20-24 is repeated here in verses 1-5. What is the purpose of keeping God's commandments and drawing near to wisdom? v. 5 \_\_\_\_\_ Keep my commandments, and live. That they may keep thee from the strange woman, from the stranger which flattereth with her words.  
 A sad story is told in verses 6-23 of a youth who strayed and, without the protection of God's word, was snared by the strange woman.  
 2. This young man was void of \_\_\_\_\_ understanding \_\_\_\_\_ . v. 7  
 3. When was he passing near the strange woman's house? v. 9 \_\_\_\_\_  
 In the twilight, in the evening, in the black and dark night  
 4. According to Jesus Christ, how will a man stumble? John 11:10 \_\_\_\_\_  
 if a man walk in the night, he stumbleth, because there is no light in him.  
 5. Describe the heart of this woman who was dressed as a harlot. v. 10 \_\_\_\_\_ subtil of heart.  
 (She is loud and stubborn; her feet abide not in her house: Now is she without, now in the streets, and lieth in wait at every corner.)  
 6. How is the serpent described in Genesis 3:1? \_\_\_\_\_ the serpent was more subtil than any beast  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 7. In the end, how did the woman force the youth and cause him to yield? v. 21 \_\_\_\_\_  
 With her much fair speech she caused him to yield, with the flattering of her lips she forced him.

8. Hopelessly lured, how did he go to her? v. 22 He goeth after her straightway, as an ox goeth to the slaughter, or as a fool to the correction of the stocks;
9. What was he ignorant of? v. 23 knoweth not that it is for his life.
10. What are we not ignorant of? II Corinthians 2:11 for we are not ignorant of his (the devils) devices.
11. Describe the house of the strange woman. v. 27 Her house is the way to hell, going down to the chambers of death.

## CHAPTER 8 - READ THE CHAPTER FIRST

Chapter 8 offers a wonderful contrast to the oppressive darkness of the previous chapter. **Wisdom speaks**; she shines forth her goodness, her worth, her authority, and her bounty toward men.

1. The young man in Chapter 7 suffered his fate needlessly. Why? v. 1 Doth not wisdom cry? and understanding put forth her voice. He didn't listen to wisdom.
2. Many voices clamor for attention. Wisdom can be heard above them all. Where does she stand? v. 2a She standeth in the top of high places

Jesus Christ is above the gods and great men of the world. He stands at the top and reigns supreme--King of Kings and Lord of Lords! Some mistakenly believe and proclaim that "all (spiritual) paths lead to God." Scripture plainly teaches that there is only **one way** to God and that all other paths lead to destruction. (John 14:6, 10:1, 7-9; 3:17,18; Acts 4:12; I John 2:22,23)

3. Because God is not willing that any should perish, He makes wisdom accessible to all by stationing her by the way i in the places of the common paths. v.2b
4. To whom does wisdom call? v. 4 Unto you, O men, my voice is to the sons of man.... everyone

The New International Version translates verse 4, "I raise my voice to all mankind." God's love and seeking power know no bounds; wisdom's voice reaches into all the earth.

5. The strange woman spoke flattery and deceit. What does wisdom speak? vv. 6,7 I will speak of excellent things; and the opening of my lips shall be right things. 7 For my mouth shall speak truth; and wickedness is an abomination to my lips. 8 All the words of my mouth are in righteousness; there is nothing froward or perverse in them.
6. How do kings reign, princes decree justice, and leaders rule? vv. 15,16 By me kings reign, and princes decree justice. By me princes rule, and nobles, even all the judges of the earth..... All reign and rule by wisdom
7. What is better than fine gold and choice silver? v. 19 My(Wisdoms) fruit is better than gold, yea, than fine gold; and my revenue than choice silver.
8. What does wisdom promise to those who love her? v. 21 I love them that love me; and those that seek me early shall find me. That I may cause those that love me to inherit substance; and I will fill their treasures.

The claims of wisdom and the truth of her words are supported by what she reveals about herself in verses 22-31. Wisdom is an essential characteristic of the nature of God. The Lord possessed wisdom and brought her forth as an expression of His nature when He conceived and executed the plans of creation. Reread verses 22-31.

9. Wisdom brings her discourse to a close in verses 32-36. What are her first five words in verse 32? Now therefore hearken unto me

10. Who is a blessed man? v. 34 Blessed is the man that heareth me, watching daily at my gates,  
waiting at the posts of my doors
- 
11. In finding wisdom, what else does one find and obtain? v. 35 For whoso findeth me findeth life, and shall obtain favour of the Lord.
- 
12. Those who hate wisdom love death. v. 36

## CHAPTER 9 - READ THE CHAPTER FIRST

The introduction to Proverbs is concluded in Chapter 9 with two invitations. Both wisdom and the strange woman have prepared feasts; man's choice of which he will attend determines his eternal destiny.

1. Wisdom has prepared a place for her feast. What has she built and hewn out? v. 1 Wisdom hath builded her house, she hath hewn out her seven pillars:
- Seven is God's number of perfection and completion. The seven pillared house may represent a perfect dwelling place where man will be completely satisfied and fulfilled. Read John 14:1-4 and Revelation 21:4.
2. The meat has been prepared, the wine mixed, and the table set. Whom does she send forth with invitation? v. 3 sent forth her maidens: Read Matt. 22:1-4.
3. What is wisdom's invitation? v. 5 Come, eat of my bread, and drink of the wine which I have mingled  
Read Matt. 26:26-28.
4. What is the beginning of wisdom? v. 10 The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom
5. Most modern versions of the Bible translate "holy" in verse 10 as "the Holy One." Using this meaning, what is understanding? v. 10 and the knowledge of the holy (the Holy One) is understanding.  
Knowledge of Jesus Christ being the Christ of God the Father, as my savior.
6. While wisdom stands at the top, the foolish woman (strange woman, evil woman, adulteress, etc.) sits on a seat in the high places calling to passersby. What is her invitation? v. 17 Stolen waters are sweet, and bread eaten in secret is pleasant.,, Adultery and fornication in secret, laying and saying that it will be good and know body will know... but it's death and everyone finds out.
7. The bread and water offered by the foolish woman are illicit and impure, yet she describes them as being "sweet" and "pleasant." Sin does give certain private pleasures for a season, but ultimately where can the guests who feast at sin's banquet table be found? v. 18  
But he knoweth not that the dead are there; and that her guests are in the depths of hell.... need to say no more.

## PART II: CHAPTERS 10-29, THE PROVERBS OF SOLOMON

By the end of Solomon's introduction, hopefully the reader has chosen the path of wisdom and is ready to receive godly instruction for daily living. An open and teachable spirit is necessary in order to benefit from the proverbs.

The proverbs are presented seemingly without order or logical sequence. Each one stands alone, an individual gem worthy of private examination. Scattered throughout the chapters, however, are proverbs which share common themes or subjects. For this study of Solomon's proverbs, five topics have been chosen: children and parenting, slothfulness and diligence, speech, relationships with others, and building godly character.

Before proceeding to the first topic, please read Chapters 10-15. Notice the frequent use of proverbs which **compare** and **contrast**. Most easily recognizable are the ones which use the conjunction "but"; for example, "The fear of the wicked, it shall come upon him: **but** the desire of the righteous shall be granted" (10:24).

### CHILDREN AND PARENTING

1. Solomon's first proverb regards the parent-child relationship. What makes a glad father? 10:1  
A wise son maketh a glad father  


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2. God is pleased when His sons and daughters are wise, when they govern their lives by His Word and by His Spirit. What does the Spirit of God say in Proverbs 23:15? \_\_\_\_\_  
My son, if thine heart be wise, my heart shall rejoice, even mine.  


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3. What is a foolish son to his father and mother? 17:25 A foolish son is a grief to his father, and bitterness to her that bare him.  
 In the Proverbs, God has given definite and practical instruction for raising children--wise children who cause their parents joy and not grief. Strongly emphasized is the necessity for **training** and **discipline**. Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child;  


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4. Children are not naturally wise. In fact, what is bound in the heart of a child? 22:15 heart of a child;
5. What will drive this foolishness far from him? 22:15 but the rod of correction shall drive it far from him.
6. What happens when a child is "left to himself"? 29:15 \_\_\_\_\_  
a child left to himself bringeth his mother to shame.  


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7. How is the fruit of wisdom brought forth in a child? 29:15 \_\_\_\_\_  
The rod and reproof give wisdom  


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8. What two things will a corrected child give to his parents? 29:17 \_\_\_\_\_  
he shall give thee rest; yea, he shall give delight unto thy soul.  


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9. Consistent disciplining can be difficult and distasteful, but the Bible plainly declares in Proverbs 13:24 that he who spares the rod hateth his son  


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10. Early training becomes ingrained within a person's character. What promise is given in Proverbs 22:6? Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it.  


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### SLOTHFULNESS AND DILIGENCE

"Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might."(Eccl. 9:10) The Lord intends us to apply this instruction diligently in both material and spiritual matters. God is not at all lenient concerning slothfulness, for they that would not fill their vessels with oil were denied when the bridegroom came (Matthew 25:1-12).

1. Who is a wise son? 10:5 He that gathereth in summer is a wise son  


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2. Who is a son that causes shame? 10:5 but he that sleepeth in harvest is a son that causeth shame.
3. What is a sluggard to them that send him? 10:26 As vinegar to the teeth, and as smoke to the eyes, so is the sluggard to them that send him.
4. Whose hand makes rich? 10:4 but the hand of the diligent maketh rich.
5. Whose hand will rule and not be under tribute? 12:24 The hand of the diligent shall bear rule
6. The slothful man is a brother to him that is a brother to him that is a great waster. 18:9
7. The slothful man is so lazy and wasteful that he will not even roasteth not that which he took in hunting 12:27
8. Proverbs 13:4 states that the soul of the sluggard desires, yet has nothing. According to 21:25, why does the desire of the slothful kill him? The desire of the slothful killeth him; for his hands refuse to labour
9. Describe the way of the slothful man and the way of the righteous. 15:19 The way of the slothful man is as an hedge of thorns: but the way of the righteous is made plain.
10. The slothful cannot bear inconvenience or discomfort. Why does the sluggard refuse to plow? 20:4 The sluggard will not plow by reason of the cold
11. What will happen to him later in harvest? 20:4 therefore shall he beg in harvest, and have nothing.
12. What does the slothful man say? 22:13 The slothful man saith, There is a lion without, I shall be slain in the streets.

Fear, real or feigned, can be used as an excuse to keep a person from doing something for God. The slothful man becomes preoccupied with imaginary difficulties, thereby preventing himself from using and multiplying the talents that God has given.

13. Why should we not love sleep? 20:13 lest thou come to poverty
14. What must we do in order to have our need for bread and other necessities satisfied? 20:13 open thine eyes, and thou shalt be satisfied with bread.
15. What will happen to a man who is diligent in his business? 22:29 he shall stand before kings; he shall not stand before mean men.

Before continuing to the next topic, please read Chapters 16-22. Rather than using contrast, many of the proverbs in this section use **repetition** and **addition** to emphasize the truth. These proverbs are most easily recognized by their use of the conjunction "and." For example, "Pride goeth before destruction, **and** an haughty spirit before a fall" (16:18); "A man's gift maketh room for him, **and** bringeth him before great men" (18:16).

## SPEECH

Our speech is so important that over 65 proverbs deal with this subject!

1. What are in the power of the tongue? 18:21 Death and life are in the power of the tongue

2. Our tongue is a very powerful instrument. Used destructively, it can cut and kill like the piercings of a sword  
 but the kind tongue of the wise is health. 12:18
3. The lips of the righteous feed many. 10:21
4. Read John 21:15-17. In Spirit-led obedience to the Lord's command, Peter fed many on the day of Pentecost by his anointed preaching (Acts 2:14-41). According to verse 41, how many were fed? three thousand souls
5. What is the mouth of a righteous man? Prov. 10:11 is a well of life
6. What is in the mouth of the foolish? 14:3 is a rod of pride
7. What are the mouth and lips of a fool? 18:7 A fool's mouth is his destruction, and his lips are the snare of his soul.
8. What is in the lips of an ungodly man? 16:27 there is as a burning fire.
9. A wholesome tongue brings healing and reconciliation, for it is a a tree of life  
. 15:4
10. Divine wisdom has perfect timing. How good is a word spoken in due season! 15:23
11. Many times God's good word arrives at the point of greatest need, when all hope is seemingly gone. Read Luke 7:11-15. What were the words of Jesus spoken in verse 14 that lifted this weeping mother's heart? and said unto her, Weep not. ... Young man, I say unto thee, Arise.
12. Pleasant words are as an honeycomb, sweet to the soul,  
and and health to the bones. Prov. 16:24  
 The Bible is full of pleasant words that, if taken in, will yield sweetness and health to our souls.  
 Read Psalm 19:7-10.
13. Who shows forth righteousness? 12:17 He that speaketh truth
14. What shall be established for ever? 12:19 The lip of truth
15. What are an abomination to the Lord? 12:22 Lying lips
16. He that speaketh lies shall not escape. 19:5
17. Read about the lying deceit of Ananias and Sapphira in Acts 5:1-11. Their sin was planned in private, yet was detected and exposed by the Spirit of God. Ananias and Sapphira may have thought they were lying to men, but to whom were they actually lying? vv. 3,4  
the Holy Ghost, thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God, the Spirit of God
18. The bread of deceit (or lying) may be sweet to a man, but what will happen afterwards? 20:17  
his mouth shall be filled with gravel.
19. God has reserved severe judgment for liars. They will have their part in in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone. Revelation 21:8
20. A wise person is one who refraineth his lips. 10:19

21. Who keeps his life and his soul from troubles? 13:3, 21:23 He that keepeth his mouth keepeth his life  
Whoso keepeth his mouth and his tongue keepeth his soul from troubles.
22. From Proverbs 29:11, describe the fool and the wise man. \_\_\_\_\_  
A fool uttereth all his mind: but a wise man keepeth it in till afterwards.
23. When is even a fool counted wise? 17:28 when he holdeth his peace
24. The heart of the righteous studieth to answer. 15:28
25. Who reveals secrets? 11:13 A talebearer revealeth secrets
26. A person who is of a faithful spirit concealeth the matter. 11:13
27. A whisperer separates chief friends. 16:28
28. Describe the words of a talebearer. 18:8, 26:22 are as wounds, and they go down into the innermost parts of the belly.
29. According to James 3:6, the tongue is a fire that defileth the whole body.
30. The fire of strife ceases where there is no wood.. no talebearer. 26:20
31. As the north wind drives away rain, what will drive away a backbiting tongue? 25:23 \_\_\_\_\_  
an angry countenance
32. A man who bears false witness against his neighbor is like a dangerous weapon that is capable of inflicting deadly wounds. How is such a man described in 25:18? \_\_\_\_\_  
is a maul, and a sword, and a sharp arrow.
33. How can we help to deliver souls from the binding power of Satan and from eternal damnation? Read Mark 16:15,16; Luke 24:46-48; Romans 1:15,16 and then answer from Proverbs 14:25.  
A true witness delivereth souls.... by preaching Jesus and being a true witness

Surely, as this brief study of speech in Proverbs has shown, we hold the power of life and death in the wise or unwise use of our tongues. Let us use our tongues wisely and be a tree of life to ourselves and others!

Before continuing to the next topic, please read Chapters 23-29. Note the chapters (25-29) which were copied later by the men of Hezekiah.

## RELATIONSHIPS WITH OTHERS

As Christians, our actions and attitudes toward all those with whom we deal must be carefully considered and regulated. So important is the testimony we project, that the New Testament describes us as epistles, "known and read of all men" (II Corinthians 3:2)

1. What covers all sins? 10:12 love covereth all sins.
2. Who loves at all times? 17:17 A friend loveth at all times
3. Who do you think the friend is that sticks closer than a brother? Prov. 18:24 and John 15:13-15  
I have called you friends; Jesus
4. The sweetness of a friend's good counsel is like Ointment  
and perfume that rejoice the heart. 27:9

5. What makes a heavy heart glad? 12:25 a good word  
 No better remedy can be found for a heavy heart than the good news of the gospel. The good Word of God is filled with promises and encouragement for the soul in need.
6. In order to be truly helpful, sensitivity to the needs of others is important. What is a person like who sings songs to a heavy heart? 25:20 \_\_\_\_\_  
As he that taketh away a garment in cold weather, and as vinegar upon nitre  
 (Nitre is soda.)
7. Who is harder to be won than a strong city? 18:19 A brother offended is harder
8. We can become dull without stimulation and challenge from others. As iron sharpens iron, so does a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend. 27:17
9. Whom are we not to forsake? 27:10 Thine own friend, and thy father's friend
10. What is better than a stalled ox (fatted calf) with hatred? 15:17 \_\_\_\_\_  
a dinner of herbs where love is
11. Why will the man with a bountiful eye be blessed? 22:9 he giveth of his bread to the poor.
12. He that honoreth his Maker has \_\_\_\_\_ mercy \_\_\_\_\_ on the poor. 14:31
13. Who sins and is void of wisdom? 11:12, 14:21 He that despiseth his neighbour sinneth
14. Who is of great understanding? 14:29 He that is slow to wrath
15. What turns away wrath? 15:1 A soft answer turneth away wrath
16. Who is better than the mighty and than one who takes a city? 16:32 \_\_\_\_\_  
He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city.
17. With whom are we not to make friendship and why? 22:24,25 \_\_\_\_\_  
Make no friendship with an angry man; and with a furious man thou shalt not go:
18. Who shall be wise? 13:20 He that walketh with wise men shall be wise
19. How can a prince (or one in authority) be persuaded? 25:15 By long forbearing is a prince persuaded.
20. Faithfulness is required of a steward (I Corinthians 4:2). What kind of a messenger refreshes the soul of his masters? 25:13 so is a faithful messenger to them that send him: for he refresheth the soul of his masters
21. Confidence in an unfaithful man in time of trouble is like \_\_\_\_\_ is like a broken tooth,  
 and \_\_\_\_\_ a foot out of joint. \_\_\_\_\_ . 25:19
22. What is rottenness of the bones? 14:30 envy is the rottenness of the bones.
23. What are we not to do when our enemy stumbles and falls? 24:17 \_\_\_\_\_  
Rejoice not when thine enemy falleth, and let not thine heart be glad when he stumbleth
24. What are we to do if our enemy is hungry or thirsty? 25:21 \_\_\_\_\_  
If thine enemy be hungry, give him bread to eat; and if he be thirsty, give him water to drink

25. What will be the results of our kindness? 25:22 \_\_\_\_\_  
For thou shalt heap coals of fire upon his head, and the Lord shall reward thee

## BUILDING GODLY CHARACTER

Closely related to controlling our speech and improving our relationships with others is the challenge of building a godly character. The speech that is uttered and the relationships that are maintained proceed forth from the condition of a man's heart (Luke 6:45). External behavior can never truly be corrected until the heart condition is made right.

As you study the following proverbs, consider each quality carefully and let the Holy Spirit minister to you.

1. Initially and repeatedly a godly person must choose between the values of this world and God's kingdom of righteousness. What will not profit in the day of wrath? What delivers from death? 11:4  
Riches profit not in the day of wrath: but righteousness delivereth from death.
2. Choosing God and His will is always the best decision. Having holiness and a good conscience are of far greater value than any amount of worldly goods. Little with fear of the Lord is better than \_\_\_\_\_ great treasure and trouble therewith. 15:16
3. What comes before honor? 15:33 \_\_\_\_\_ before honour is humility.
4. Why should we refrain from putting ourselves forth in the presence of the king or from standing the place of great men? Answer in your own words. 25:6,7 \_\_\_\_\_  
it's humiliating and a source of depression to be sent down, but joy and a sense of accomplishment accompanies promotion
5. What will bring a man low? Whom will honor uphold? 29:23 \_\_\_\_\_  
A man's pride shall bring him low: but honour shall uphold the humble in spirit.
6. A prudent man not only foresees evil, he also \_\_\_\_\_ hideth \_\_\_\_\_ himself from it. 22:3
7. How do people depart from evil? 16:6 \_\_\_\_\_ by the fear of the Lord
8. What are we to be in all the day long? 23:17 \_\_\_\_\_ be thou in the fear of the Lord all the day long.  
The godly person continually looks to God, acknowledging Him in every detail of daily life.
9. What will happen if we commit our works unto the Lord? 16:3 \_\_\_\_\_ thy thoughts shall be established.
10. What two things does God ask of us? 23:26 \_\_\_\_\_ thine heart, and let thine eyes observe my ways.  
so heart and eyes
11. What enters more into a wise man than a hundred stripes into a fool? 17:10 \_\_\_\_\_
12. Who shall have mercy? 28:13 \_\_\_\_\_ A reproof entereth more into a wise man than an hundred stripes into a fool.
13. The Lord's delight is the \_\_\_\_\_ prayer of the upright \_\_\_\_\_ . 15:8
14. More acceptable to the Lord than sacrifice is \_\_\_\_\_ To do justice and judgment is more acceptable to the Lord than sacrifice.  
\_\_\_\_\_ . 21:3
15. The wicked may flee when no man pursues, but the righteous are \_\_\_\_\_ bold as a lion.  
\_\_\_\_\_ . 28:1

16. What benefit comes to a man whose ways please the Lord? 16:7 \_\_\_\_\_  
he maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him.

We hope the proverbs that were chosen for this topical study have challenged your heart. Further benefit will be gained from your continued study of and prayerful meditation upon the Proverbs. God's Word has the power to change our undesirable character traits and ingrained habits.

### PART III: CHAPTERS 30 AND 31, THE WORDS OF AGUR AND LEMUEL

#### CHAPTER 30 - READ THE CHAPTER FIRST

1. To whom did Agur speak the words of this prophecy? v. 1 \_\_\_\_\_  
the man spake unto Ithiel, even unto Ithiel and Ucal,

2. Agur was important enough to be included in scripture, yet he was a humble man. What four things does he say about himself? vv. 2,3 \_\_\_\_\_  
Surely I am more brutish than any man, and have not the understanding of a man.  
I neither learned wisdom, nor have the knowledge of the holy.

3. Although Agur confessed that he did not have knowledge of the Holy One (see page 10, question 5), his questions in verse 4 indicate a desire to know personally the mighty God and His Son. What was Agur's last question in verse 4? \_\_\_\_\_  
what is his name, and what is his son's name, if thou canst tell?

We have reason to rejoice! Because of the cross, we have been reconciled to God and can therefore personally know Him and His Son.

4. What two confessions of faith does Agur make in verse 5? \_\_\_\_\_  
Every word of God is pure: he is a shield unto them that put their trust in him.

5. What two things does Agur earnestly ask of God? vv. 7,8 \_\_\_\_\_  
Remove far from me vanity and lies: give me neither poverty nor riches; feed me with food convenient for me:

6. Why does he want his needs met, with no more, nor less? v. 9 \_\_\_\_\_  
Lest I be full, and deny thee, and say, Who is the Lord? or lest I be poor, and steal, and take the name of my God in vain.

7. List the four things that are never satisfied, that never say, "It is enough." vv. 15,16 \_\_\_\_\_  
The grave; and the barren womb; the earth that is not filled with water; and the fire that saith not, It is enough

8. What will happen to the eye that mocks his father and despises to obey his mother? v. 17 \_\_\_\_\_  
the ravens of the valley shall pick it out, and the young eagles shall eat it.

9. What four things are a mystery to Agur? vv. 18,19 \_\_\_\_\_  
 The way of an eagle in the air; the way of a serpent upon a rock; the way of a ship in the midst of the sea;  
 and the way of a man with a maid

The set of proverbs in verses 21-23 lists achievements that may seem significant, but are actually intolerable.

10. In contrast, the next set of proverbs lists four seemingly insignificant creatures whose achievements are exceedingly wise. What are these creatures? vv. 24-28 \_\_\_\_\_  
 The ants are a people not strong, The conies are but a feeble folk, The locusts have no king, The spider taketh hold with her hands

The coney is a hyrax or rock badger that lives in the rocky niches in the deserts, hills, and mountains of Africa and Southwest Asia.

11. Name the four things in Agur's final set of proverbs that he considered stately and majestic. vv. 29-31 \_\_\_\_\_  
 A lion which is strongest among beasts, A greyhound; an he goat also; and a king, against whom there is no rising up.

### CHAPTER 31 - READ THE CHAPTER FIRST

1. What are the words of King Lemuel? v. 1 \_\_\_\_\_ the prophecy that his mother taught him.  
 Verses 2 through 9 contain warnings and wise counsel to the king.
2. Why are kings and princes not to drink wine or strong drink? vv. 4,5 \_\_\_\_\_ It is not for kings, O Lemuel, it is not for kings to drink wine; nor for princes strong drink: Lest they drink, and forget the law, and pervert the judgment of any of the afflicted.
3. When a king opens his mouth, what two things should he do? v. 9 \_\_\_\_\_  
 judge righteously, and plead the cause of the poor and needy.

Wisdom and the strange woman were presented in Chapters 1 through 9. Here in verse 10, the third woman in Proverbs is introduced--the virtuous woman. She may be a representation of Lemuel's mother. She definitely typifies the ideal for which godly men ought to seek and the pattern which godly women ought to emulate. She also symbolizes God's virtuous woman, the church, in full maturity, strength and power.

4. The price of a virtuous woman is far above \_\_\_\_\_ rubies. v. 10
5. What did the church cost God? I Peter 1:18,19; Acts 20:28 \_\_\_\_\_ the precious blood of Christ, Jesus' own blood.
6. What is one quality of the virtuous woman? v. 11 \_\_\_\_\_ heart of her husband doth safely trust in her.. Trustworthy
7. How does she treat her husband? v. 12 \_\_\_\_\_ She will do him good and not evil all the days of her life.
8. What does the virtuous woman do with her hands? v. 13 \_\_\_\_\_ She seeketh wool, and flax, and worketh willingly with her hands.
9. What does she perceive about her merchandise? v. 18 \_\_\_\_\_  
 She perceiveth that her merchandise is good: her candle goeth not out by night.
10. To whom does she reach out? v. 20 \_\_\_\_\_ to the poor; yea, she reacheth forth her hands to the needy.
11. Read Matthew 25:34-40. The Lord has instructed His followers also to reach out to the poor and

needy. List three of the ministries Jesus has directed us to perform. I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat:  
I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: 36 Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited  
me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me.

12. Although presently clothed with strength and honor, when shall the virtuous woman rejoice? v.25  
she shall rejoice in time to come.
13. Describe the speech of the virtuous woman. v. 26 She openeth her mouth with wisdom; and in her tongue is the law of kindness.
14. What does she refrain from eating? v. 27 eateth not the bread of idleness.
15. How do her children and husband treat her? v. 28 call her blessed; her husband also, and he praiseth her.
16. Favour is deceitful and beauty is vain. v. 30
17. What woman will be praised? v. 30 a woman that feareth the Lord, she shall be praised.
18. The final picture of the virtuous woman portrays her standing in the city gates receiving praise.  
What will praise her in the gates? v. 31 let her own works praise her in the gates.

The portrait of the virtuous woman aptly draws Proverbs to a close, for the entire book then becomes a progressive portrait of a believer's journey from innocence to full maturity. In Chapters 1-9, the innocent youth is presented with a choice--good or evil, wisdom or the strange woman, Christ or the devil. Once the right choice is made, Chapters 10-30 provide the maturing believer with a rich and unfailing guide to righteous Christian living. If taken to heart and given full application, this "instruction in righteousness" will lead the believer unto perfection, the perfection exemplified by the life of the virtuous woman. A New Testament passage outlining this three-stage progression from innocence to full maturity is found in II Timothy 3:15-17.

Our burning desire should be to come into full maturity where we are victorious and "thoroughly furnished unto all good works." Like the virtuous woman, we too will receive a great reward. Our works will be praised in the heavenly gates; and as the virtuous woman was a crowned tribute to wisdom, we will be a crowned tribute to Christ! In great joy we will remove our jewel-studded crowns and cast them at the feet of Him whose love and grace wrought for us such a reward.

Let us go on unto perfection! Hebrews 6:1

I have answered all questions to the best of my ability.

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