

The Bible Jesus Used

A Gospel-Centered Glance at
the Old Testament

Bethlehem Baptist Church, fall 2013–spring 2014
Jason S. DeRouchie

Proverbs at a Glance

Preamble	1:1–7
Prologue: The importance of wisdom	1:8–9:18
Proverbial Collections	10:1–31:9
Proverbs of Solomon I	10:1–22:16
Sayings of the Wise I	22:17–24:22
Sayings of the Wise II	24:23–34
Proverbs of Solomon II	25:1–29:27
Sayings of Agur	30:1–33
Sayings of Lemuel	31:1–9
Epilogue: The ideal wife, a woman of wisdom	31:10–31

Proverbial Collection (10:1–31:9)

❖ **Some basics:**

- ❖ **Wisdom**: The pursuit of understanding and of preserving right order in God's world, all under the fear of God.
- ❖ **Proverb**: Short, memorable generalizations that are usually true.

❖ Are there ever *absolute* (“always true”) proverbs?

❖ Samples:

❖ Prov 10:27. The fear of the LORD prolongs life, but the years of the wicked will be short.

❖ Prov 11:20. Those of crooked heart are an abomination to the LORD; but those of blameless ways are his delight.

❖ Are there ever *absolute* (“always true”) proverbs?

❖ Samples:

- ❖ Prov 10:27. The fear of the LORD prolongs life, but the years of the wicked will be short.
- ❖ Prov 11:20. Those of crooked heart are an abomination to the LORD; but those of blameless ways are his delight.
- ❖ Prov 13:21. Disaster pursues sinners, but the righteous are rewarded with good.
- ❖ Prov 16:1. The plans of the heart belong to man, but the answer of the tongue is from the LORD.

❖ Are there ever *absolute* (“always true”) proverbs?

❖ Samples:

❖ Prov 10:27. The fear of the LORD prolongs life, but the years of the wicked will be short.

❖ Prov 11:20. Those of crooked heart are an abomination to the LORD; but those of blameless ways are his delight.

❖ Prov 13:21. Disaster pursues sinners, but the righteous are rewarded with good.

❖ Prov 16:1. The plans of the heart belong to man, but the answer of the tongue is from the LORD.

❖ **Prov 16:4**. The LORD has made everything for its purpose, even the wicked for the day of trouble.

- ❖ **Prov 16:4**. The LORD has made everything for its purpose, even the wicked for the day of trouble.
- ❖ **Prov 16:31**. Gray hair is a crown of glory; it is gained in a righteous life.
- ❖ **Prov 19:21**. Many are the plans in the mind of a man, but it is the purpose of the LORD that will stand.

- ❖ **Prov 16:4**. The LORD has made everything for its purpose, even the wicked for the day of trouble.
- ❖ **Prov 16:31**. Gray hair is a crown of glory; it is gained in a righteous life.
- ❖ **Prov 19:21**. Many are the plans in the mind of a man, but it is the purpose of the LORD that will stand.
- ❖ **Prov 21:30**. No wisdom, no understanding, no counsel can avail against the LORD.

- ❖ **Prov 16:4**. The LORD has made everything for its purpose, even the wicked for the day of trouble.
- ❖ **Prov 16:31**. Gray hair is a crown of glory; it is gained in a righteous life.
- ❖ **Prov 19:21**. Many are the plans in the mind of a man, but it is the purpose of the LORD that will stand.
- ❖ **Prov 21:30**. No wisdom, no understanding, no counsel can avail against the LORD.
- ❖ **THE RULE:** Those proverbs that focus on God's character and actions are absolute, for God does not change.

❖ Proverbs and the family

- ❖ *Order in relationships:* Proverbs are designed to nurture right order in God's world, at the center of which is the human family.
 - ❖ **Prov. 12:4**. An excellent wife is the crown of her husband, but she who brings shame is like rottenness in his bones.
 - ❖ **Prov 15:18**. A hot-tempered man stirs up strife, but he who is slow to anger quiets contention.
 - ❖ **Prov. 17:1**. Better is a dry morsel with quiet than a house full of feasting and strife.

- ❖ **Prov. 19:13–14**. A foolish son is ruin to his father, and a wife’s quarreling is a continual dripping of rain. ¹⁴ House and wealth are inherited from fathers, but a prudent wife is from the LORD.
- ❖ **Prov 20:6**. Many a man proclaims his own steadfast love, but a faithful man who can find?
- ❖ **Prov. 21:9**. It is better to live in a corner of the housetop than in a house shared with a quarrelsome wife.

- ❖ ***Order in sexuality.*** Rather than offering dictates, Proverbs motivates sexual purity by highlighting its benefits and stressing sins' consequences.
- ❖ **Prov. 2:16–19.** So you will be delivered from the forbidden woman, from the adulteress with her smooth words,¹⁷ who forsakes the companion of her youth and forgets the covenant of her God;¹⁸ for her house sinks down to death, and her paths to the departed;¹⁹ none who go to her come back, nor do they regain the paths of life.
- ❖ **Prov. 5:3–8.** For the lips of a forbidden woman drip honey, and her speech is smoother than oil,⁴ but in the end she is bitter as wormwood, sharp as a two-edged sword.⁵ Her feet go down to death; her steps follow the path to Sheol;⁶ she does not ponder the path of life; her ways wander, and she does not know it.⁷ And now, O sons, listen to me, and do not depart from the words of my mouth.⁸ Keep your way far from her, and do not go near the door of her house.

- ❖ **Prov. 5:15–19**. Drink water from your own cistern, flowing water from your own well. ¹⁶ Should your springs be scattered abroad, streams of water in the streets? ¹⁷ Let them be for yourself alone, and not for strangers with you. ¹⁸ Let your fountain be blessed, and rejoice in the wife of your youth, ¹⁹ a lovely deer, a graceful doe. Let her breasts fill you at all times with delight; be intoxicated always in her love.
- ❖ **Prov. 6:27–29, 32**. Can a man carry fire next to his chest and his clothes not be burned? ²⁸ Or can one walk on hot coals and his feet not be scorched? ²⁹ So is he who goes in to his neighbor's wife; none who touches her will go unpunished. . . . ³² He who commits adultery lacks sense; he who does it destroys himself.

- ❖ ***Order in communication.*** Words can destroy families and, in turn, communities.
- ❖ **Prov 4:24**. Put away from you crooked speech, and put devious talk far from you.
- ❖ **Prov. 13:1**. A wise son hears his father's instruction, but a scoffer does not listen to rebuke.
- ❖ **Prov. 13:3**. Whoever guards his mouth preserves his life; he who opens wide his lips comes to ruin.
- ❖ **Prov. 15:1**. A soft answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger.
- ❖ **Prov. 15:4**. A gentle tongue is a tree of life, but perverseness in it breaks the spirit.

- ❖ **Prov 15:23**. To make an apt answer is a joy to a man, and a word in season, how good it is!
- ❖ **Prov. 20:20**. If one curses his father or his mother, his lamp will be put out in utter darkness.
- ❖ **Prov. 21:19**. It is better to live in a desert land than with a quarrelsome and fretful woman.
- ❖ **Prov 25:11**. A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in a setting of silver.

“My son, do not regard lightly the discipline of the Lord, nor be weary when reproved by him. For the Lord disciplines the one he loves, and chastises every son whom he receives” (Heb 12:5–6, citing Prov 3:11–12).

❖ ***Order in disciplining children***

❖ **Overview (Paul D. Wegner, “Discipline in the Book of Proverbs,” *JETS* 48 [2005]: 715–32):**

❖ **Level 1:** Parents *Teach* the Guidelines

❖ **Level 2:** Parents *Reiterate* the Guidelines

❖ **Level 3:** Parents *Enforce* the Guidelines

❖ **Level 4:** The Government Steps in

❖ ***Level 1: Parental Teaching***

❖ **Parents are to *encourage* proper behavior.**

❖ **Prov 1:8–9**. Hear, my son, your father's instruction, and forsake not your mother's teaching, ⁹ for they are a graceful garland for your head and pendants for your neck.

❖ **Prov 2:1–5**. My son, if you receive my words . . . , ² making your ear attentive to wisdom and inclining your heart to understanding; ³ yes, if you call out for insight and raise your voice for understanding, ⁴ if you seek it like silver and search for it as for hidden treasures, ⁵ then you will understand the fear of the LORD and find the knowledge of God.

- ❖ **Prov 3:13–15**. Blessed is the one who finds wisdom, and the one who gets understanding, ¹⁴ for the gain from her is better than gain from silver and her profit better than gold. ¹⁵ She is more precious than jewels, and nothing you desire can compare with her.
- ❖ **Prov 4:7–8**. The beginning of wisdom is this: Get wisdom, and whatever you get, get insight. ⁸ Prize her highly, and she will exalt you; she will honor you if you embrace her.

❖ **Parents *inform* of improper behavior.**

- ❖ **Prov. 1:10–11, 15**. My son, if sinners entice you, do not consent. ¹¹ If they say, “Come with us, let us lie in wait for blood; let us ambush the innocent without reason . . .,” ¹⁵ my son, do not walk in the way with them; hold back your foot from their paths.
- ❖ **Prov 3:31–32**. Do not envy a man of violence and do not choose any of his ways, ³² for the devious person is an abomination to the LORD, but the upright are in his confidence.

- ❖ Parents *explain* the negative consequences of sin.
- ❖ **Prov. 1:18–19**. But these men lie in wait for their own blood; they set an ambush for their own lives. ¹⁹ Such are the ways of everyone who is greedy for unjust gain; it takes away the life of its possessors.
- ❖ **Prov. 5:3–6**. For the lips of a forbidden woman drip honey, and her speech is smoother than oil, ⁴ but in the end she is bitter as wormwood, sharp as a two-edged sword. ⁵ Her feet go down to death; her steps follow the path to Sheol; ⁶ she does not ponder the path of life; her ways wander, and she does not know it.

❖ ***Level 2: Parental Warning***

❖ **Parents gently *exhort* in light of dangers.**

❖ **Prov. 4:1–2**. Hear, O sons, a father's instruction, and be attentive, that you may gain insight, ² for I give you good precepts; do not forsake my teaching.

❖ **Prov. 4:14–16**. Do not enter the path of the wicked, and do not walk in the way of the evil. ¹⁵ Avoid it; do not go on it; turn away from it and pass on. ¹⁶ For they cannot sleep unless they have done wrong; they are robbed of sleep unless they have made someone stumble.

❖ **Prov. 5:21–23**. A man's ways are before the eyes of the LORD, and he ponders all his paths. ²² The iniquities of the wicked ensnare him, and he is held fast in the cords of his sin. ²³ He dies for lack of discipline, and because of his great folly he is led astray.

❖ ***Level 3: Parental Enforcing***

❖ **Parents gently *rebuke and reprove* (without corporal punishment).**

❖ **Prov. 3:12**. The LORD reproves him whom he loves, as a father the son in whom he delights.

❖ **Prov. 24:24–25**. Whoever says to the wicked, “You are right,” will be cursed by peoples, abhorred by nations, ²⁵ but those who rebuke the wicked will have delight, and a good blessing will come upon them.

- ❖ Parents *perform* corporal punishment (i.e., spank) in a way that does not cause physical harm.
- ❖ **Prov 19:18**. Discipline your son, for there is hope; do not set your heart on putting him to death.
- ❖ **Prov. 13:24**. Whoever spares the rod hates his son, but he who loves him is diligent to discipline him.
- ❖ **Prov. 22:15**. Folly is bound up in the heart of a child, but the rod of discipline drives it far from him.
- ❖ **Prov. 23:13–14**. Do not withhold discipline from a child; if you strike him with a rod, he will not die. ¹⁴ If you strike him with the rod, you will save his soul from Sheol.

❖ **Prov. 29:15**. The rod and reproof give wisdom, but a child left to himself brings shame to his mother.

- ❖ ***Level 4: Governmental Enforcing.*** Serious sins can lead to serious punishment, when the sin of the youth begins to influence the welfare of the community, not just the family.
- ❖ **Governments deliver extreme blows to punish and curb evil.**
 - ❖ **Prov. 20:30.** Blows that wound cleanse away evil; strokes make clean the innermost parts.
 - ❖ **Prov. 10:31.** The mouth of the righteous brings forth wisdom, but the perverse tongue will be cut off.

- ❖ **Government can bring the death penalty in extreme cases.**
- ❖ **Prov 19:18**. Discipline your son, for there is hope; do not set your heart on putting him to death.
- ❖ **Deut. 21:18–21**. If a man has a stubborn and rebellious son who will not obey the voice of his father or the voice of his mother, and, though they discipline him, will not listen to them, ¹⁹ then his father and his mother shall take hold of him and bring him out to the elders of his city at the gate of the place where he lives, ²⁰ and they shall say to the elders of his city, “This our son is stubborn and rebellious; he will not obey our voice; he is a glutton and a drunkard.” ²¹ Then all the men of the city shall stone him to death with stones. So you shall purge the evil from your midst, and all Israel shall hear, and fear.

- ❖ **Gen 9:6**. Whoever sheds the blood of man, by man shall his blood be shed, for God made man in his own image.
- ❖ **Rom 13:3–4**. Would you have no fear of the one who is in authority? Then do what is good, and you will receive his approval, ⁴ for he is God's servant for your good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for he does not bear the sword in vain. For he is the servant of God, an avenger who carries out God's wrath on the wrongdoer.