

Intro to Proverbs

Wisdom & Skillful Living



What is a Proverb?

The word proverb comes from a verb meaning “to be like, to be compared with, to be parallel, to be similar.” Hence, a proverb is simply a form of communication truth by using comparisons or figures of speech.

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What is Wisdom?

Wisdom is the theme that weaves through the book of Proverbs. The main Hebrew word for wisdom is hokmah. It was used commonly for the skill of craftsmen, sailors, singers, administrators, and counselors. Hokmah pointed to the experience and efficiency of these various workers in using their skills.



Similarly, a person who possesses hokmah in his spiritual life and relationship to God is one who is both knowledgeable and experienced in following God's way. Biblical wisdom essentially involves skill in the art of godly living.

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1 Kings 4:29-34 (NLT)

29 God gave Solomon very great wisdom and understanding, and knowledge as vast as the sands of the seashore. 30 In fact, his wisdom exceeded that of all the wise men of the East and the wise men of Egypt.



31 He was wiser than anyone else, including Ethan the Ezrahite and the sons of Mahol—Heman, Calcol, and Darda. His fame spread throughout all the surrounding nations. 32 He composed some 3,000 proverbs and wrote 1,005 songs.



33 He could speak with authority about all kinds of plants, from the great cedar of Lebanon to the tiny hyssop that grows from cracks in a wall. He could also speak about animals, birds, small creatures, and fish.
34 And kings from every nation sent their ambassadors to listen to the wisdom of Solomon.



Proverbs 1:1-7 (NLT)

1 These are the proverbs of Solomon, David's son, king of Israel. **2** Their purpose is to teach people wisdom and discipline, to help them understand the insights of the wise.



3 Their purpose is to teach people to live disciplined and successful lives, to help them do what is right, just, and fair. 4 These proverbs will give insight to the simple, knowledge and discernment to the young.



5 Let the wise listen to these proverbs and become even wiser. Let those with understanding receive guidance 6 by exploring the meaning in these proverbs and parables, the words of the wise and their riddles.



7 Fear of the Lord is the foundation of true knowledge, but fools despise wisdom and discipline.



Exodus 20:18-21 (NLT)

18 When the people heard the thunder and the loud blast of the ram's horn, and when they saw the flashes of lightning and the smoke billowing from the mountain, they stood at a distance, trembling with fear.



19 And they said to Moses, "You speak to us, and we will listen. But don't let God speak directly to us, or we will die!"



**20 “Don’t be afraid,”
Moses answered them,
“for God has come in
this way to test you, and
so that your fear of him
will keep you from
sinning!”**



21 As the people stood in the distance, Moses approached the dark cloud where God was.



Joshua 2:9, 11 (NLT)

9 “I know the Lord has given you this land,” she told them. “We are all afraid of you. Everyone in the land is living in terror.



**11 No wonder our hearts
have melted in fear! No
one has the courage to
fight after hearing such
things. For the Lord your
God is the supreme God of
the heavens above and the
earth below.**



Job 1:1, 4-5 (NLT)

1 There once was a man named Job who lived in the land of Uz. He was blameless—a man of complete integrity. He feared God and stayed away from evil.



4 Job's sons would take turns preparing feasts in their homes, and they would also invite their three sisters to celebrate with them. 5 When these celebrations ended—sometimes after several days—Job would purify his children.



He would get up early in the morning and offer a burnt offering for each of them. For Job said to himself, "Perhaps my children have sinned and have cursed God in their hearts." This was Job's regular practice.



Psalm 112:1 (NLT)

**1 Praise the Lord!
How joyful are those
who fear the Lord and
delight in obeying his
commands.**



Psalm 128:1 (NLT)

1 How joyful are those who fear the Lord— all who follow his ways!

