

A Topical Study Of

PROVERBS

Wisdom for the Children of the King

NASB Text & Study Guide

by Taylor Ladd

The book of Proverbs is part of a larger section of the Old Testament known as Hebrew Poetry. In addition to Proverbs, this section includes the books of Job, Psalms, Ecclesiastes, and Song of Solomon, and is designed to present God's wisdom for dealing with the everyday issues in life. Job addresses the purpose of suffering and trials, and shows us how to find meaning and peace as we face these trials. Psalms is a collection of Hebrew hymns that practically illustrate the place of prayer, praise, and devotion in the life of God's people. Ecclesiastes presents one man's extensive search to find the ultimate answer to the purpose of life. Song of Solomon is a beautiful narrative that shows what true love and romance look like in contrast to infatuation and lust. In some ways, Proverbs is a summary of all of these topics, presented in a series of short sayings that teach practical wisdom for every area of life. In this book you will find wisdom for families, young people, old people, rich, poor, and every other type of person.

Let's begin with a few observations about the nature of Hebrew poetry, which can be divided into 3 main types. **Lyric poetry** is typically written to be accompanied by music (many of the Psalms fit this type). **Didactic poetry** (such as Proverbs & Ecclesiastes) is composed of short sayings designed to share observations rather than to communicate emotions. **Dramatic poetry** is characterized by the use of narratives and dialogue to communicate ideas (like Job & Song of Solomon, for example). Unlike English poetry (which is typically characterized by rhyming words), the rhymes in Hebrew poetry are based on thoughts, not sounds. Parallelism is one of the most distinct techniques used in Hebrew poetry, and can take several forms. For example:

1. **Contrast**, signified by the word *but*: "He who walks in integrity walks securely, but he who perverts his ways will be found out" (10:9).
2. **Completion**, signified by the word *and*: "The wise in heart will be called understanding, and sweetness of speech increases persuasiveness" (16:21).
3. **Comparison**, signified by the word *than*: "Better is a poor man who walks in his integrity, than he who is perverse in speech and is a fool" (19:1).

A few suggestions for getting the most out of Hebrew poetry:

1. Picture it! Whenever possible, learn to see the proverb unfolding in your mind.
2. Look for literary devices and poetic techniques, such as parallelism, simile, metaphor, and personification.
3. Whenever possible, use context to clarify the meaning of a confusing proverb. When the surrounding context seems unrelated, use proverbs or other passages that are clearer to shed light on difficult sayings.
4. Spend your time looking for truth from each proverb instead of looking for exceptions to the rule. God shares these proverbs with us for a reason.
5. Use multiple versions to get a better feel for the meaning of a proverb.

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Lesson 1

Attitudes (Training The Conscience)

Study each proverb & write down what important things it teaches for your life.

3:5-6 Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make your paths straight.

4:23 Watch over your heart with all diligence, for from it flow the springs of life.

14:15 The naive believes everything, but the prudent man considers his steps.

15:15 All the days of the afflicted are bad, but a cheerful heart has a continual feast.

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

16:3 Commit your works to the LORD, and your plans will be established.

16:25 There is a way which seems right to a man, but its end is the way of death.

19:21 Many are the plans in a man's heart, but the counsel of the LORD, it will stand.

20:27 The spirit of man is the lamp of the LORD, searching all the innermost parts of his being.

24:17-18 Do not rejoice when your enemy falls, and do not let your heart be glad when he stumbles; lest the LORD see it and be displeased, and He turn away His anger from him.

27:19 As in water face reflects face, so the heart of man reflects man.

Other Proverbs That Apply To This Topic:

Lesson 2

Choosing Companions

Study each proverb & write down what important things it teaches for your life.

11:22 As a ring of gold in a swine's snout, so is a beautiful woman who lacks discretion.

13:20 He who walks with wise men will be wise, but the companion of fools will suffer harm.

14:7 Leave the presence of a fool, or you will not discern words of knowledge.

17:17 A friend loves at all times, and a brother is born for adversity.

18:24 A man of many friends comes to ruin, but there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother.

20:19 He who goes about as a slanderer reveals secrets, therefore do not associate with a gossip.

22:5 Thorns and snares are in the way of the perverse; he who guards himself will be far from them.

23:6-7 Do not eat the bread of a selfish man, or desire his delicacies; for as he thinks within himself, so he is. He says to you, "Eat and drink!" But his heart is not with you.

27:6 Faithful are the wounds of a friend, but deceitful are the kisses of an enemy.

27:17 Iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another.

28:7 He who keeps the law is a discerning son, but he who is a companion of gluttons humiliates his father.

29:24 He who is a partner with a thief hates his own life; he hears the oath but tells nothing.

31:30 Charm is deceitful and beauty is vain, but a woman who fears the LORD, she shall be praised.

Other Proverbs That Apply To This Topic:

Lesson 3

Getting Along With Others

Study each proverb & write down what important things it teaches for your life.

16:7 When a man's ways are pleasing to the LORD, He makes even his enemies to be at peace with him.

17:14 The beginning of strife is like letting out water, so abandon the quarrel before it breaks out.

18:17 The first to plead his case seems just, until another comes and examines him.

18:19 A brother offended is harder to be won than a strong city, and contentions are like the bars of a castle.

20:22 Do not say, "I will repay evil"; wait for the LORD, and He will save you.

25:17 Let your foot rarely be in your neighbor's house, lest he become weary of you and hate you.

25:18 Like a club and a sword and a sharp arrow is a man who bears false witness against his neighbor.

25:21-22 If your enemy is hungry, give him food to eat; and if he is thirsty, give him water to drink; for you will heap burning coals on his head, and the LORD will reward you.

26:17 Like one who takes a dog by the ears is he who passes by and meddles with strife not belonging to him.

26:18-19 Like a madman who throws firebrands, arrows and death, so is the man who deceives his neighbor, and says, "Was I not joking?"

27:14 He who blesses his friend with a loud voice early in the morning, it will be reckoned a curse to him.

Other Proverbs That Apply To This Topic:

Study each proverb & write down what important things it teaches for your life.

10:1 A wise son makes a father glad, but a foolish son is a grief to his mother.

12:4 An excellent wife is the crown of her husband, but she who shames him is as rottenness in his bones.

13:1 A wise son accepts his father's discipline, but a scoffer does not listen to rebuke.

13:24 He who spares his rod hates his son, but he who loves him disciplines him diligently.

14:1 The wise woman builds her house, but the foolish tears it down with her own hands.

17:1 Better is a dry morsel and quietness with it than a house full of feasting with strife.

17:6 Grandchildren are the crown of old men, and the glory of sons is their fathers.

19:13-14 A foolish son is destruction to his father, and the contentions of a wife are a constant dripping. House and wealth are an inheritance from fathers, but a prudent wife is from the LORD.

20:20 He who curses his father or his mother, his lamp will go out in time of darkness.

21:9 It is better to live in a corner of a roof, than in a house shared with a contentious woman.

22:6 Train up a child in the way he should go, even when he is old he will not depart from it.

22:15 Foolishness is bound up in the heart of a child; the rod of discipline will remove it far from him.

27:8 Like a bird that wanders from her nest, so is a man who wanders from his home.

28:24 He who robs his father or his mother, and says, "It is not a transgression," is the companion of a man who destroys.

Other Proverbs That Apply To This Topic:

Study each proverb & write down what important things it teaches for your life.

10:19 When there are many words, transgression is unavoidable, but he who restrains his lips is wise.

12:18 There is one who speaks rashly like the thrusts of a sword, but the tongue of the wise brings healing.

15:1 A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger.

15:28 The heart of the righteous ponders how to answer, but the mouth of the wicked pours out evil things.

17:28 Even a fool, when he keeps silent, is considered wise; when he closes his lips, he is counted prudent.

18:6 A fool's lips bring strife, and his mouth calls for blows.

18:13 He who gives an answer before he hears, it is folly and shame to him.

18:21 Death and life are in the power of the tongue, and those who love it will eat its fruit.

26:20 For lack of wood the fire goes out, and where there is no whisperer, contention quiets down.

26:22-23 The words of a whisperer are like dainty morsels, and they go down into the innermost parts of the body. Like an earthen vessel overlaid with silver dross are burning lips and a wicked heart.

26:28 A lying tongue hates those it crushes, and a flattering mouth works ruin.

Other Proverbs That Apply To This Topic:

Lesson 6

Laziness & Self-Discipline

Study each proverb & write down what important things it teaches for your life.

10:5 He who gathers in summer is a son who acts wisely, but he who sleeps in harvest is a son who acts shamefully.

10:26 Like vinegar to the teeth and smoke to the eyes, so is the lazy one to those who send him.

12:27 A slothful man does not roast his prey, but the precious possession of a man is diligence.

14:4 Where no oxen are, the manger is clean, but much increase comes by the strength of the ox.

15:19 The way of the sluggard is as a hedge of thorns, but the path of the upright is a highway.

15:22 Without consultation, plans are frustrated, but with many counselors they succeed.

16:26 A worker's appetite works for him, for his hunger urges him on.

18:9 He also who is slack in his work is brother to him who destroys.

19:24 The sluggard buries his hand in the dish, and will not even bring it back to his mouth.

22:13 The sluggard says, "There is a lion outside; I shall be slain in the streets!"

24:27 Prepare your work outside, and make it ready for yourself in the field; afterwards, then, build your house.

Other Proverbs That Apply To This Topic:

Lesson 7

Pride & Humility

Study each proverb & write down what important things it teaches for your life.

12:9 Better is he who is lightly esteemed and has a servant, than he who honors himself and lacks bread.

13:10 Through presumption comes nothing but strife, but with those who receive counsel is wisdom.

15:25 The LORD will tear down the house of the proud, but He will establish the boundary of the widow.

16:18 Pride goes before destruction, and a haughty spirit before stumbling.

16:19 It is better to be of a humble spirit with the lowly, than to divide the spoil with the proud.

18:12 Before destruction the heart of man is haughty, but humility goes before honor.

21:4 Haughty eyes and a proud heart, the lamp of the wicked, is sin.

25:6-7 Do not claim honor in the presence of the king, and do not stand in the place of great men; for it is better that it be said to you, "Come up here," than that you should be put lower in the presence of the prince, whom your eyes have seen.

25:27 It is not good to eat much honey, nor is it glory to search out one's own glory.

26:12 Do you see a man wise in his own eyes? There is more hope for a fool than for him.

27:21 The crucible is for silver and the furnace for gold, and a man is tested by the praise accorded him.

30:32 If you have been foolish in exalting yourself or if you have plotted evil, put your hand on your mouth.

Other Proverbs That Apply To This Topic:

Lesson 8

Receiving Correction

Study each proverb & write down what important things it teaches for your life.

12:1 Whoever loves discipline loves knowledge, but he who hates reproof is stupid.

12:15 The way of a fool is right in his own eyes, but a wise man is he who listens to counsel.

13:18 Poverty and shame will come to him who neglects discipline, but he who regards reproof will be honored.

15:32 He who neglects discipline despises himself, but he who listens to reproof acquires understanding.

17:10 A rebuke goes deeper into one who has understanding than a hundred blows into a fool.

19:20 Listen to counsel and accept discipline, that you may be wise the rest of your days.

25:11-12 Like apples of gold in settings of silver is a word spoken in right circumstances. Like an earring of gold and an ornament of fine gold is a wise reprover to a listening ear.

26:11 Like a dog that returns to its vomit is a fool who repeats his folly.

27:5 Better is open rebuke than love that is concealed.

28:23 He who rebukes a man will afterward find more favor than he who flatters with the tongue.

29:1 A man who hardens his neck after much reproof will suddenly be broken beyond remedy.

Other Proverbs That Apply To This Topic:

Study each proverb & write down what important things it teaches for your life.

3:25-26 Do not be afraid of sudden fear, nor of the onslaught of the wicked when it comes; for the LORD will be your confidence, and will keep your foot from being caught.

10:28-30 The hope of the righteous is gladness, but the expectation of the wicked perishes. The way of the LORD is a stronghold to the upright, but ruin to the workers of iniquity. The righteous will never be shaken, but the wicked will not dwell in the land.

18:10 The name of the LORD is a strong tower; the righteous runs into it and is safe.

23:17-18 Do not let your heart envy sinners, but live in the fear of the LORD always. Surely there is a future, and your hope will not be cut off.

24:13-14 My son, eat honey, for it is good, yes, the honey from the comb is sweet to your taste; know that wisdom is thus for your soul; if you find it, then there will be a future, and your hope will not be cut off.

24:19-20 Do not fret because of evildoers, or be envious of the wicked; for there will be no future for the evil man; the lamp of the wicked will be put out.

29:25 The fear of man brings a snare, but he who trusts in the LORD will be exalted.

29:26 Many seek the ruler's favor, but justice for man comes from the LORD.

Other Proverbs That Apply To This Topic:

Lesson 10

Envy & Contentment

Study each proverb & write down what important things it teaches for your life.

12:14 A man will be satisfied with good by the fruit of his words, and the deeds of a man's hands will return to him.

13:19 Desire realized is sweet to the soul, but it is an abomination to fools to depart from evil.

14:14 The backslider in heart will have his fill of his own ways, but a good man will be satisfied with his.

14:30 A tranquil heart is life to the body, but passion is rottenness to the bones.

22:2 The rich and the poor have a common bond, the LORD is the maker of them all.

24:1-2 Do not be envious of evil men, nor desire to be with them; for their minds devise violence, and their lips talk of trouble.

25:16 Have you found honey? Eat only what you need, lest you have it in excess and vomit it.

27:4 Wrath is fierce and anger is a flood, but who can stand before jealousy?

27:7 A sated man loathes honey, but to a famished man any bitter thing is sweet.

Other Proverbs That Apply To This Topic:

Lesson 11

Selfishness & Generosity

Study each proverb & write down what important things it teaches for your life.

11:24 There is one who scatters, yet increases all the more, and there is one who withholds what is justly due, but it results only in want.

11:25 The generous man will be prosperous, and he who waters will himself be watered.

13:7 There is one who pretends to be rich, but has nothing; another pretends to be poor, but has great wealth.

14:31 He who oppresses the poor reproaches his Maker, but he who is gracious to the needy honors Him.

18:1 He who separates himself seeks his own desire, he quarrels against all sound wisdom.

18:16 A man's gift makes room for him, and brings him before great men.

19:17 He who is gracious to a poor man lends to the LORD, and He will repay him for his good deed.

21:25-26 The desire of the sluggard puts him to death, for his hands refuse to work; all day long he is craving, while the righteous gives and does not hold back.

24:11-12 Deliver those who are being taken away to death, and those who are staggering to slaughter, O hold them back. If you say, "See, we did not know this," does He not consider it who weighs the hearts? And does He not know it who keeps your soul? And will He not render to man according to his work?

28:22 A man with an evil eye hastens after wealth, and does not know that want will come upon him.

28:27 He who gives to the poor will never want, but he who shuts his eyes will have many curses.

Other Proverbs That Apply To This Topic:

Study each proverb & write down what important things it teaches for your life.

1:7 The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge; fools despise wisdom and instruction.

3:7-8 Do not be wise in your own eyes; fear the LORD and turn away from evil. It will be healing to your body, and refreshment to your bones.

3:35 The wise will inherit honor, but fools display dishonor.

4:7-9 "The beginning of wisdom is: acquire wisdom; and with all your acquiring, get understanding. "Prize her, and she will exalt you; she will honor you if you embrace her. "She will place on your head a garland of grace; she will present you with a crown of beauty."

4:26-27 Watch the path of your feet, and all your ways will be established. Do not turn to the right nor to the left; turn your foot from evil.

19:8 He who gets wisdom loves his own soul; he who keeps understanding will find good.

20:15 There is gold, and an abundance of jewels; but the lips of knowledge are a more precious thing.

21:16 A man who wanders from the way of understanding will rest in the assembly of the dead.

21:20 There is precious treasure and oil in the dwelling of the wise, but a foolish man swallows it up.

23:23 Buy truth, and do not sell it, get wisdom and instruction and understanding.

28:26 He who trusts in his own heart is a fool, but he who walks wisely will be delivered.

Other Proverbs That Apply To This Topic:

Lesson 13

Money & Wealth

Study each proverb & write down what important things it teaches for your life.

3:9-10 Honor the LORD from your wealth, and from the first of all your produce; so your barns will be filled with plenty, and your vats will overflow with new wine.

10:2 Ill-gotten gains do not profit, but righteousness delivers from death.

10:15 The rich man's wealth is his fortress, the ruin of the poor is their poverty.

13:11 Wealth obtained by fraud dwindles, but the one who gathers by labor increases it.

13:22 A good man leaves an inheritance to his children's children, and the wealth of the sinner is stored up for the righteous.

15:16-17 Better is a little with the fear of the LORD, than great treasure and turmoil with it. Better is a dish of vegetables where love is, than a fattened ox and hatred with it.

21:17 He who loves pleasure will become a poor man; he who loves wine and oil will not become rich.

22:1-2 A good name is to be more desired than great riches, favor is better than silver and gold. The rich and the poor have a common bond, the LORD is the maker of them all.

22:26-27 Do not be among those who give pledges, among those who become sureties for debts. If you have nothing with which to pay, why should he take your bed from under you?

23:4-5 Do not weary yourself to gain wealth, cease from your consideration of it. When you set your eyes on it, it is gone. For wealth certainly makes itself wings, like an eagle that flies toward the heavens.

30:8-9 Keep deception and lies far from me, give me neither poverty nor riches; feed me with the food that is my portion, lest I be full and deny Thee and say, "Who is the LORD?" Or lest I be in want and steal, and profane the name of my God.

Other Proverbs That Apply To This Topic:

Lesson 14

Wickedness & Righteousness

Study each proverb & write down what important things it teaches for your life.

4:18-19 But the path of the righteous is like the light of dawn, that shines brighter and brighter until the full day. The way of the wicked is like darkness; they do not know over what they stumble.

11:18 The wicked earns deceptive wages, but he who sows righteousness gets a true reward.

11:30 The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life, and he who is wise wins souls.

12:3 A man will not be established by wickedness, but the root of the righteous will not be moved.

13:25 The righteous has enough to satisfy his appetite, but the stomach of the wicked is in want.

14:11 The house of the wicked will be destroyed, but the tent of the upright will flourish.

14:34 Righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a disgrace to any people.

15:29 The LORD is far from the wicked, but He hears the prayer of the righteous.

18:10 The name of the LORD is a strong tower; the righteous runs into it and is safe.

21:21 He who pursues righteousness and loyalty finds life, righteousness and honor.

25:26 Like a trampled spring and a polluted well is a righteous man who gives way before the wicked.

Other Proverbs That Apply To This Topic:

Lesson 15

Overcoming Temptation

Study each proverb & write down what important things it teaches for your life.

10:9 He who walks in integrity walks securely, but he who perverts his ways will be found out.

11:5-6 The righteousness of the blameless will smooth his way, but the wicked will fall by his own wickedness. The righteousness of the upright will deliver them, but the treacherous will be caught by their own greed.

12:13 An evil man is ensnared by the transgression of his lips, but the righteous will escape from trouble.

14:12 There is a way which seems right to a man, but its end is the way of death.

14:22 Will they not go astray who devise evil? But kindness and truth will be to those who devise good.

15:3 The eyes of the LORD are in every place, watching the evil and the good.

15:9 The way of the wicked is an abomination to the LORD, but He loves him who pursues righteousness.

16:6 By lovingkindness and truth iniquity is atoned for, and by the fear of the LORD one keeps away from evil.

20:17 Bread obtained by falsehood is sweet to a man, but afterward his mouth will be filled with gravel.

21:15 The execution of justice is joy for the righteous, but is terror to the workers of iniquity.

26:27 He who digs a pit will fall into it, and he who rolls a stone, it will come back on him.

Other Proverbs That Apply To This Topic:

Lesson 16

Honesty

Study each proverb & write down what important things it teaches for your life.

11:1 A false balance is an abomination to the LORD, but a just weight is His delight.

11:3 The integrity of the upright will guide them, but the falseness of the treacherous will destroy them.

11:20 The perverse in heart are an abomination to the LORD, but the blameless in their walk are His delight.

12:19 Truthful lips will be established forever, but a lying tongue is only for a moment.

14:25 A truthful witness saves lives, but he who speaks lies is treacherous.

16:11 A just balance and scales belong to the LORD; all the weights of the bag are His concern.

16:13 Righteous lips are the delight of kings, and he who speaks right is loved.

17:15 He who justifies the wicked, and he who condemns the righteous, both of them alike are an abomination to the LORD.

20:14 “Bad, bad,” says the buyer; but when he goes his way, then he boasts.

24:26 He kisses the lips who gives a right answer.

28:13 He who conceals his transgressions will not prosper, but he who confesses and forsakes them will find compassion.

Other Proverbs That Apply To This Topic:

Lesson 17

Anger

Study each proverb & write down what important things it teaches for your life.

14:29 He who is slow to anger has great understanding, but he who is quick-tempered exalts folly.

15:18 A hot-tempered man stirs up strife, but the slow to anger pacifies contention.

16:29 A man of violence entices his neighbor, and leads him in a way that is not good.

16:32 He who is slow to anger is better than the mighty, and he who rules his spirit, than he who captures a city.

19:19 A man of great anger shall bear the penalty, for if you rescue him, you will only have to do it again.

21:14 A gift in secret subdues anger, and a bribe in the bosom, strong wrath.

22:24-25 Do not associate with a man given to anger; or go with a hot-tempered man, lest you learn his ways, and find a snare for yourself.

25:28 Like a city that is broken into and without walls is a man who has no control over his spirit.

27:3 A stone is heavy and the sand weighty, but the provocation of a fool is heavier than both of them.

30:33 For the churning of milk produces butter, and pressing the nose brings forth blood; so the churning of anger produces strife.

Other Proverbs That Apply To This Topic:

Lesson 18

Dealing With Sorrow

Study each proverb & write down what important things it teaches for your life.

12:25 Anxiety in the heart of a man weighs it down, but a good word makes it glad.

14:10 The heart knows its own bitterness, and a stranger does not share its joy.

14:13 Even in laughter the heart may be in pain, and the end of joy may be grief.

14:32 The wicked is thrust down by his wrongdoing, but the righteous has a refuge when he dies.

15:13 A joyful heart makes a cheerful face, but when the heart is sad, the spirit is broken.

15:30 Bright eyes gladden the heart; good news puts fat on the bones.

17:22 A joyful heart is good medicine, but a broken spirit dries up the bones.

18:14 The spirit of a man can endure his sickness, but a broken spirit who can bear?

24:10 If you are slack in the day of distress, your strength is limited.

25:19 Like a bad tooth and an unsteady foot is confidence in a faithless man in time of trouble.

25:20 Like one who takes off a garment on a cold day, or like vinegar on soda, is he who sings songs to a troubled heart.

Other Proverbs That Apply To This Topic: