

The Writer and Gatherer of Proverbs

Proverbs 1:1

May 17, 2015

Introduction

Proverbs is a unique part of Scripture because of its style and the man who wrote most of Proverbs. The style of Proverbs is very different from any of the books or letters in the Bible for the very simple reason that there is not much structure in Proverbs. From **Chapter 10** on, it is a collection of Proverbs. A commentator said it best that it is a jewel heap, and from that heap, you pick up a jewel and study it and treasure it¹. That is a good picture of Proverbs.

Today we are looking at the man who wrote most of Proverbs and gathered all materials for it.

Proverbs 1:1 The proverbs of Solomon son of David, king of Israel:

I. Solomon's Training

- Solomon's parents
 - Son of David
 - David—the Shepherd-King of Israel
 - Same king who had defeated Goliath in his youth
 - David—man after God's own heart

***Acts 13:22** After removing Saul, He made David their king. He testified concerning him: 'I have found David son of Jesse a man after My own heart; he will do everything I want him to do.'*

- David's vision
 - David loved God and wanted to build a temple for God
 - God tells him no
 - However God establishes a glorious covenant with David

***2 Samuel 7:12-16** When your days are over and you rest with your fathers, I will raise up your offspring to succeed you, who will come from your own body, and I will establish his kingdom. **13** He is the one who will build a house for My Name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. **14** I will be his father, and he will be My son. When he does wrong, I will punish him with the rod of men, with floggings inflicted by men. **15** But My love will never be taken away from him, as I took it away from Saul, whom I removed from before you. **16** Your house and your kingdom will endure forever before Me; your throne will be established forever.' "*

- Messianic covenant—through David's line will come the Messiah
- Messiah—from Jacob's blessing of Judah (Shiloh) (**Gen 49:8-12**)
- God also promises that one of David's son will build the Temple
- David and Bathsheba
 - David and Bathsheba committed adultery together and had a child (**2 Sam 11**)
 - That child dies (**2 Sam 12:12-19**)
 - Then they have a second son together

¹ Dan Phillips, *God's Wisdom in Proverbs* (The Woodlands: Kress, 2011), 25.

2 Samuel 12:24a Then David comforted his wife Bathsheba, and he went to her and lay with her. She gave birth to a son.

- God gives David his son's name

1 Chronicles 22:9 But you will have a son who will be a man of peace and rest, and I will give him rest from all his enemies on every side. His name will be Solomon, and I will grant Israel peace and quiet during his reign.

- Solomon in Hebrew is Shelomah
- From Shalom—peace
- Solomon means peaceable
- Solomon also has another name

2 Samuel 12:24b-25 She gave birth to a son, and they named him Solomon. The LORD loved him; **25** and because the LORD loved him, He sent word through Nathan the prophet to name him Jedidiah.

- Jedidiah means Beloved of the Lord
- Solomon's inheritance
 - He was next in line to be king (appointed by God Himself **1 Chron 22:9**)

1 Kings 1:29-30 The king then took an oath: "As surely as the LORD lives, who has delivered me out of every trouble, **30** I will surely carry out today what I swore to you by the LORD, the God of Israel: Solomon your son shall be king after me, and he will sit on my throne in my place."

- David charges Solomon with responsibility and warns him

1 Kings 2:1-4 When the time drew near for David to die, he gave a charge to Solomon his son. **2** "I am about to go the way of all the earth," he said. "So be strong, show yourself a man, **3** and observe what the LORD your God requires: Walk in His ways, and keep His decrees and commands, His laws and requirements, as written in the Law of Moses, so that you may prosper in all you do and wherever you go, **4** and that the LORD may keep His promise to me: 'If your descendants watch how they live, and if they walk faithfully before Me with all their heart and soul, you will never fail to have a man on the throne of Israel.'

1 Chronicles 28:9-10 "And you, my son Solomon, acknowledge the God of your father, and serve him with wholehearted devotion and with a willing mind, for the LORD searches every heart and understands every motive behind the thoughts. If you seek Him, He will be found by you; but if you forsake Him, He will reject you forever. **10** Consider now, for the LORD has chosen you to build a temple as a sanctuary. Be strong and do the work."

- Keeping the Law
 - As David knew the Law (**Ps 119**), Solomon knew the Law as well
 - God had commanded kings to know what God's Law says

Deuteronomy 17:14-20 When you enter the land the LORD your God is giving you and have taken possession of it and settled in it, and you say, "Let us set a king over us like all the nations around us," **15** be sure to appoint over you the king the LORD your God chooses. He must be from among your own brothers. Do not place a foreigner over you, one who is not a brother Israelite. **16** The king, moreover, must not acquire great numbers of horses for himself or make the people return to Egypt to get more of them, for the LORD has told you, "You are not to go back that way again." **17** He must not take many wives, or his heart will be led astray. He must not accumulate large amounts of silver and gold. **18** When he takes the throne of his kingdom, he is to write for himself on a scroll a copy of this law, taken from that of the priests, who are Levites. **19** It is to be with him, and he is to read it all the days of his life so that he may learn to revere the LORD his God and follow carefully all the words of this law and these decrees **20** and not consider himself better than his brothers and turn from the law to the right or to the left. Then he and his descendants will reign a long time over his kingdom in Israel.

- Solomon has great respect for God's law
 - Proverbs is the exposition of the Law

II. Solomon's Qualification

- Solomon's dream

1 Kings 3:4-14 The king went to Gibeon to offer sacrifices, for that was the most important high place, and Solomon offered a thousand burnt offerings on that altar. **5** At Gibeon the LORD appeared to Solomon during the night in a dream, and God said, "Ask for whatever you want Me to give you." **6** Solomon answered, "You have shown great kindness to your servant, my father David, because he was faithful to You and righteous and upright in heart. You have continued this great kindness to him and have given him a son to sit on his throne this very day. **7** "Now, O LORD my God, You have made Your servant king in place of my father David. But I am only a little child and do not know how to carry out my duties. **8** Your servant is here among the people You have chosen, a great people, too numerous to count or number. **9** So give Your servant a discerning heart to govern Your people and to distinguish between right and wrong. For who is able to govern this great people of Yours?" **10** The Lord was pleased that Solomon had asked for this. **11** So God said to him, "Since you have asked for this and not for long life or wealth for yourself, nor have asked for the death of your enemies but for discernment in administering justice, **12** I will do what you have asked. I will give you a wise and discerning heart, so that there will never have been anyone like you, nor will there ever be. **13** Moreover, I will give you what you have not asked for—both riches and honor—so that in your lifetime you will have no equal among kings. **14** And if you walk in My ways and obey My statutes and commands as David your father did, I will give you a long life."

- God gave Solomon much wisdom (**3:12**)
 - No living person, except Jesus Christ, had Solomon's wisdom, intelligence, knowledge and understanding

Matthew 12:42 The Queen of the South will rise at the judgment with this generation and condemn it; for she came from the ends of the earth to listen to Solomon's wisdom, and now one greater than Solomon is here.

1 Kings 4:29-31, 34 God gave Solomon wisdom and very great insight, and a breadth of understanding as measureless as the sand on the seashore. **30** Solomon's wisdom was greater than the wisdom of all the men of the East, and greater than all the wisdom of Egypt. **31** He was wiser than any other man, including Ethan the Ezrahite—wiser than Heman, Calcol and Darda, the sons of Mahol. And his fame spread to all the surrounding nations. **34** Men of all nations came to listen to Solomon's wisdom, sent by all the kings of the world, who had heard of his wisdom.

Ecclesiastes 1:16 I thought to myself, "Look, I have grown and increased in wisdom more than anyone who has ruled over Jerusalem before me; I have experienced much of wisdom and knowledge."

- Solomon had written and collected many proverbs and writings

1 Kings 4:32 He spoke three thousand proverbs and his songs numbered a thousand and five.

Ecclesiastes 12:9-10 Not only was the Teacher wise, but also he imparted knowledge to the people. He pondered and searched out and set in order many proverbs. **10** The Teacher searched to find just the right words, and what he wrote was upright and true.

- Solomon was a scientist, designer, and engineer

1 Kings 4:33 He described plant life, from the cedar of Lebanon to the hyssop that grows out of walls. He also taught about animals and birds, reptiles and fish.

Ecclesiastes 2:4-9 I undertook great projects: I built houses for myself and planted vineyards. **5** I made gardens and parks and planted all kinds of fruit trees in them. **6** I made reservoirs to water groves of flourishing trees. **7** I bought male and female slaves and had other slaves who were born in my house. I also owned more herds and flocks than anyone in Jerusalem before me. **8** I amassed silver and gold for myself, and the treasure of kings and provinces. I acquired men and women singers, and a harem [1] as well—the delights of the heart of man. **9** I became greater by far than anyone in Jerusalem before me. In all this my wisdom stayed with me.

- Solomon also led people to worship YHWH

1 Kings 8:1, 22 Then King Solomon summoned into his presence at Jerusalem the elders of Israel, all the heads of the tribes and the chiefs of the Israelite families, to bring up the ark of the LORD's covenant from Zion, the City of David. **22** Then Solomon stood before the altar of the LORD in front of the whole assembly of Israel, spread out his hands toward heaven

Transition: Even after all of Solomon's greatness: God still warns Solomon that if Solomon does not obey and follow His commandments, then He will punish Solomon for his disobedience.

III. Solomon's Failure

Proverbs 19:27 Stop listening to instruction, my son,
and you will stray from the words of knowledge.

Note: Solomon's fall was a progressive downward spiral—he did not listen to what God says in **Deut 17**.

- Queen of Sheba's praise

1 Kings 10:4-9 *When the queen of Sheba saw all the wisdom of Solomon and the palace he had built, 5 the food on his table, the seating of his officials, the attending servants in their robes, his cupbearers, and the burnt offerings he made at the temple of the LORD, she was overwhelmed. 6 She said to the king, "The report I heard in my own country about your achievements and your wisdom is true. 7 But I did not believe these things until I came and saw with my own eyes. Indeed, not even half was told me; in wisdom and wealth you have far exceeded the report I heard. 8 How happy your men must be! How happy your officials, who continually stand before you and hear your wisdom! 9 Praise be to the LORD your God, who has delighted in you and placed you on the throne of Israel. Because of the LORD's eternal love for Israel, He has made you king, to maintain justice and righteousness."*

Proverbs 16:18 *Pride goes before destruction, a haughty spirit before a fall.*

- Solomon's great wealth (**1 Kings 10:14-22**)
 - 666 talents of gold each year (today's money = 1.1 billion dollars per year) (**10:14**)
 - Tributes from other countries (**4:24**)
 - Many tons of gold and silver

1 Kings 10:27 *The king made silver as common in Jerusalem as stones, and cedar as plentiful as sycamore-fig trees in the foothills.*

2 Chronicles 1:15 *The king made silver and gold as common in Jerusalem as stones, and cedar as plentiful as sycamore-fig trees in the foothills.*

- Not only that, but he has his inheritance from David; Gold and silver from Arabia; heavy taxation on the Jewish people
- Receives gift from King Hiram of Tyre every three years

1 Kings 10:22 *The king had a fleet of trading ships at sea along with the ships of Hiram. Once every three years it returned, carrying gold, silver and ivory, and apes and baboons.*

- Horses from Egypt

1 Kings 10:28-29 *Solomon's horses were imported from Egypt and from Kue - the royal merchants purchased them from Kue. 29 They imported a chariot from Egypt for six hundred shekels of silver, and a horse for a hundred and fifty. They also exported them to all the kings of the Hittites and of the Arameans.*

- Solomon's many wives

1 Kings 11:1-4 *King Solomon, however, loved many foreign women besides Pharaoh's daughter-Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Sidonians and Hittites. 2 They were from nations about which the LORD had told the Israelites, "You must not intermarry with them, because they will surely turn your hearts after their gods." Nevertheless, Solomon held fast to them in love. 3 He had seven hundred wives of royal birth and three hundred concubines, and his wives led him astray. 4 As Solomon grew old, his wives turned his heart after other gods, and his heart was not fully devoted to the LORD his God, as the heart of David his father had been.*

- Solomon loved each of his wives
- He respected their “viewpoints”, their “culture”, their “religion”²
- He loved and respected his wives so much that he embraced their gods
- A totally grim and frightening scenario
- Amazingly there is no record in Scripture of Solomon’s repentance
 - Awful King Manasseh repented (**2 Chron 33**)
 - David repented
 - There is no limit to God’s grace in the forgiveness of our sins
 - However, with Solomon’s silence, Holy Spirit is telling us that there is no safe place this side of heaven

Coram Deo

Solomon’s life is a scarecrow to warn us believers of the dangers when we stop listening to God’s instructions. Solomon was the wisest man on earth, but he was not immune to sin. None of us are immune to sin. Solomon ignored God’s counsel and went after other gods. In Ecclesiastes, Solomon tells us that he lost none of his wisdom and understanding. So the issue is not that he did not understand, it was that he stopped listening. When we stop listening to God’s word and stop reading the Bible, then we will stray from God. When we stop listening, we are starting to trust ourselves. When we trust ourselves, we have lost the fear of Yahweh.

When we go through Proverbs, we see the wisdom of Solomon in all its glory as he warns us to live in fear of Yahweh. However, we also need to keep in mind that Solomon was so much wiser than us and yet he sinned. I believe that is why the Holy Spirit has chosen not to mention Solomon’s repentance because of the severity of Solomon’s fall in spite of his wisdom. Let us live our life in the fear of Yahweh and remember and know that if it happens to Solomon, then it can happen to us.

² Holman Christian Standard Study Bible, pg 571