

## What is the “Bible”?

# τὰ βιβλία

from *biblia* (Latin)

from earlier *tà biblía* (Koine Greek)

meaning “the books” or “library” or “book”

A collection of sacred texts or scriptures that Jews and Christians consider to be a product of divine inspiration and a record of the relationship between God and humans

## Our “library” is a collection of 66 books




**66** books by  
**40** authors

[shepherds, kings,  
scholars, prophets,  
fishermen,  
a priest, a soldier,  
and a cupbearer]

from  
**3** continents  
**3** writing in  
languages  
over more than  
**1,500** years.

**The Unity  
of Scripture**

Yet with a  
single, unified  
message  
of  
God's  
nature,  
His love,  
and His plan  
of salvation  
for fallen  
humanity.



# testament

*/ˈtɛstəmənt/*  
noun

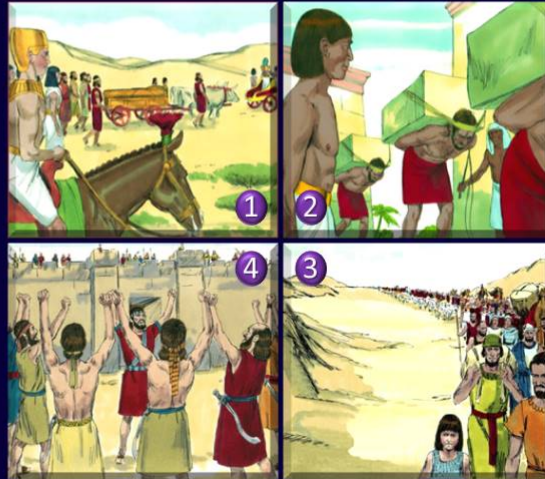
1. (law) a will setting out the disposition of personal property.
2. a. a covenant instituted between God and man,  
b. a copy of the Bible or either the Old or the New Testament.

Origin: from Late Latin *vetus testamentum* and *novum testamentum*, loan-translations of Greek *palaia diatheke* and *kaine diatheke*. The Greek **διαθήκη** (*diathēkē* /dē-ä-thä'-kā/ Strong's G1242), means a compact, a covenant, a testament or a will.



## The **Old Testament** is the story of a **Nation**

- 1 The Hebrews went to Egypt as a Family.
- 2 They were later enslaved.
- 3 Moses led them out as a Nation...
- 4 ... that conquered Canaan.



The **New Testament** is the story of a **Man**  
 ...told by people (**eyewitnesses**) who knew Him.



**A central Bible tenet**

The **New Testament** is in the  
Old Testament **concealed**,  
the **Old Testament** is in the  
New Testament **revealed**.

**Purpose**

**The purpose of this course is not to advise anyone on what I or anyone else think they should believe; it is to make sure that each has a clear concept of what the Bible itself says so that they can determine for themselves what to believe.”**

### Objectives

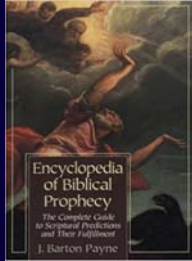
- ① Introduce the **objective study** of the Bible.
- ② Respect diverse religious and non-religious sensibilities of participants.
- ③ Avoid promotion of various religious traditions over others or of religion over non-religion.
- ④ Appreciate guidelines of Bible interpretation.
- ⑤ Take into account context, literary styles, figures of speech, grammatical context, etc.

### The Spirit of this course

ETSI DOCTRINA  
NON DARETUR

(“as if doctrine is not given.”)

## A tidbit on Prophetic Fulfilment



Per Payne, 8,352 verses (27%) out of 31,124 in the Bible are predictive.

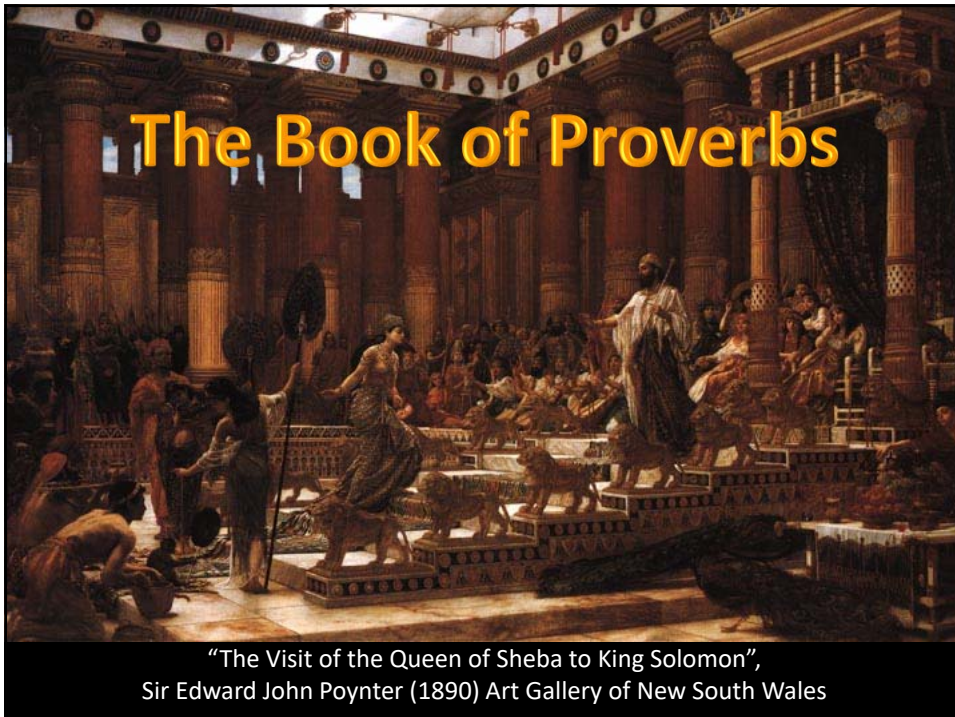
The Bible has 1,817 separate predictions covering 737 topics.

The Old Testament is 28.5% predictive while the New Testament is 21.5% predictive.

>80%

of the predictions have come true; all except those of Christ's Second Coming and the End Times.

## The Book of Proverbs



"The Visit of the Queen of Sheba to King Solomon",  
Sir Edward John Poynter (1890) Art Gallery of New South Wales

## Wisdom Literature

- Proverbs is part of the OT Wisdom Literature



| The Law |        |           |         | Kings and Priests |        |        |      |          |          | Wisdom  |         |              | Major Prophets |      |          |        | Minor Prophets |        |          |              |                 |        |          |              |         |        |       |      |      |         |       |       |       |          |           |        |           |         |
|---------|--------|-----------|---------|-------------------|--------|--------|------|----------|----------|---------|---------|--------------|----------------|------|----------|--------|----------------|--------|----------|--------------|-----------------|--------|----------|--------------|---------|--------|-------|------|------|---------|-------|-------|-------|----------|-----------|--------|-----------|---------|
| Genesis | Exodus | Leviticus | Numbers | Deuteronomy       | Joshua | Judges | Ruth | 1 Samuel | 2 Samuel | 1 Kings | 2 Kings | 1 Chronicles | 2 Chronicles   | Ezra | Nehemiah | Esther | Job            | Psalms | Proverbs | Ecclesiastes | Song of Solomon | Isaiah | Jeremiah | Lamentations | Ezekiel | Daniel | Hosea | Joel | Amos | Obadiah | Jonah | Micah | Nahum | Habakkuk | Zephaniah | Haggai | Zechariah | Malachi |

- Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs, Job and Psalms 19, 37, 104, 107, 147 and 148.

## Who was King Solomon?

- King noted for his wisdom, his wealth and his writings. His kingdom extended. World leaders sought his wisdom.
- He reigned from the Euphrates River to Egypt for 40 years from 971 to 931 BC in mostly peaceful times.
- Solomon was renowned for his building projects. His crowning achievement was the Holy Temple in Jerusalem. He taxed his people heavily and they increasingly became bitter.
- Per 1 Kings he owned 12,000 horses and 1,400 chariots, and had 700 wives of royal blood and 300 concubines.
- He composed 3,000 proverbs (some 900 in this book) and 1,005 songs. His credits include the Song of Songs, the Book of Proverbs and Ecclesiastes.





## The works of Solomon



Song of Solomon

Young and in love!  
It's just we two!



Proverbs

Listen, my son!  
Hear your father.



Ecclesiastes

All things of man  
are meaningless.

## Solomon's names

- Jedidiah - "beloved by Jehovah" (birth)
- Agur - "The Collector" (of proverbs)
- Koheleth - "The Preacher" (Ecclesiastes)
- Lemuel - "devoted to God" (his mothers' pet name)

## The Book of Proverbs

- God's book to tell us how to wise up and live.
- A proverb (משל, *mashal*) is a parable, saying, comparison, aphorism, ethical maxim or *dark saying* (חידה, *chiydah*, a riddle, enigma or perplexing question).

*A wise man will hear and increase learning; and ... attain unto wise counsels: to understand a proverb, and the interpretation; the words of the wise, and their dark sayings.*

Proverbs 1:5-6

## The theme of this book

- "Fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom."  
(Proverb 9:10)

*To fear God is to stand in awe of and quake at His righteousness, majesty and power and to trust Him by humbly depending on Him as Creator!*

- The purpose of the book of Proverbs is to:
  - Impart moral discernment and discretion
  - Help develop moral clarity and perception

### What is “wisdom”?

- Wisdom is an approach to life, a way of looking at the world
- For the Israelites, it was a way of living out their commitment to God.
- Wisdom literature examines life issues, like:
  - discipline for unruly children,
  - teaching children to become adults,
  - the dangers of gossip and slander,
  - why wicked people seem to prosper, and
  - the arrogance of sudden wealth.

### What is “wisdom”?

- Wisdom is concerned with everyday life, with how to live well.
- It examines the human condition from the perspective of human needs and concerns.
- It reveals truths of life that can be discovered from observation and tradition, but centred on reverence and commitment to God.

### חכמה *Chokmah, Wisdom*

- It occurs 45 times in Proverbs:
  - Being knowledgeable, experienced, and efficient in their areas of expertise
- Wisdom in Proverbs includes
  - practical sagacity, mental acumen, and functional skill,
  - but it also includes moral, upright living which stems from a right relationship to the Lord.

### Some definitions of “Wisdom”

- **Traditional** definition:
  - “The ability to use knowledge in the right way.”
- **Biblical** definition:
  - There is a “wisdom of this world”.  
(1 Corinthians 2:1–8; James 3:13–18)
  - Divine wisdom is from above.  
(Proverbs 8:22–31; 1 Corinthians 1:24,30; Colossians 2:3)

## God's Wisdom

- Wisdom is described as
  - Eternal (Proverbs 8:22–26)
  - The Creator of all things (Prov. 8:27–29)
  - The Beloved of God (Proverbs 8:30–31)
- True wisdom is to yield your life to Christ and obey Him. (John 1:1–2; Colossians 1:15–19)

## Man's wisdom versus God's

- **Man's wisdom is often contradictory:**
  - “Look before you leap”  
“He who hesitates is lost.”
  - “A man gets no more than he pays for”  
“The best things in life are free.”
  - “Many hands make light work”  
“Too many cooks spoil the broth.”
  - “A rolling stone gathers no moss”  
“A setting hen does not get fat.”

## God's Wisdom is never contradictory

- Any **apparent** contradiction hides a message:

*"The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge:  
but fools despise wisdom and instruction."*

(Proverb 1:7)

*"A wise child makes a glad father,  
but a foolish child is a mother's grief."* (Proverb 10:1)

*"Like a gold ring in a pig's snout is a beautiful woman  
without good sense."* (Proverb 11:22)

## Guides for Study

- Proverbs are organised.
- They include thumbnails of every character in the Bible.
- They are actually written as poetry (Hebrew poetry consists of parallelism of ideas, not rhyme or meter as our poetry does:
  - Synonymous Parallelism
  - Antithetic (Contrast) Parallelism
  - Synthetic Parallelism

### Synonymous Parallelism

- The second clause restates what is given in the first clause.

*Judgments are prepared for scorners,  
And stripes for the back of fools.*

Proverbs 19:29

- The same thought is expressed in a different way.

### Antithetic (Contrast) Parallelism

- A truth in the first clause is strengthened by contrast with an opposite truth in a second clause.

*The light of the righteous rejoiceth,  
But the lamp of the wicked shall be put out.*

Proverbs 13:9

- The second statement states the same truth by contrast with the opposite point of view.

### Synthetic Parallelism

- The second clause develops the thought of the first.

*The terror of a king is as the roaring of a lion; He that provoketh him to anger sinneth against his own life.*

Proverbs 20:2

- The second line simply continues the thought of the first line. Sometimes the second line gives a result of the first line.

### Outline of the Book of Proverbs

| <u>Section</u>  | <u>Chapters</u> |
|---|-----------------|
| • Wisdom and Folly Contrasted   | 1– 9            |
| • Proverbs of Solomon<br><i>(Written and set in order by Solomon)</i> | 10–24           |
| • Proverbs of Solomon<br><i>(Set in order by men of Hezekiah)</i>     | 25–29           |
| • Oracle of Agur  | 30              |
| • Proverbs of Lemuel's Mother   | 31              |



## Four Classes of People

- Three Losers (the Scorer, Fool and Simple):

*How long, ye simple ones, will ye love simplicity? and the scorers delight in their scorning, and fools hate knowledge?*

Proverbs 1:22

- And the Wise.

## Classes of People

# 3 Losers

- The **Scorer**

- The **Fool**

- The **Simple**

## The Scorner

- Scorners mock at God's wisdom:
  - because it is too high for them (Prov 14:6).
  - but they will not admit it because they know everything (Prov 21:24).
- The Hebrew word for "scorner" means "to make a mouth"; we can picture them sneering and curling up their lips in scorn.
- They never profit from rebuke (Prov 9:7-8; 13:1) and, as a result,
- They will one day be judged (Prov 19:29).

## The Fool

- The Fool is dense, sluggish, careless, and self-satisfied. *Nabal* ("fool") is a good example. (1 Samuel 25)
- The Fool"
  - hates instruction (Prov 1:7, 22)
  - is self-confident (Prov 12:15)
  - talks without thinking (Prov 29:11)
  - mocks at sin (Prov 14:9)

### The Simple

- The Simple are those who believe everything and everybody and lack discernment. (Prov 14:15).
- They are easily led astray by others and lack understanding. (Prov 7:7)
- They cannot see ahead and, as a result, repeatedly walk into trouble. (Prov 22:3)

### Four Classes of People

**3 Losers**

• The **Scorner**

• The **Fool**

• The **Simple**

**1 Winner**

• The **Wise**



### The Wise

- Listen to instruction Prov 1:5
- Obey what they hear Prov 10:8
- Store up what they learn Prov 10:14
- Win others to the Lord Prov 11:30
- Flee from sin Prov 14:16
- Watch their tongue Prov 16:23
- Are diligent in their daily work Prov 10:5

### Wisdom and Folly

- Consider Wisdom and Folly, the two “women” of Proverbs who are out to woo and win the hearts of people.
- There are three calls from Wisdom and three calls from Folly:
  - Wisdom calls us to God and life.
  - Folly calls us to sin and judgment.

### Three Calls of Wisdom

Wisdom's  
1<sup>st</sup> Call  
Proverbs 1

- **Salvation** (Prov 1:20-33)
- Scorners, Fool, Simple

Wisdom's  
2<sup>nd</sup> Call  
Proverbs 8

- **Wealth**
- Only the Fool & Simple

Wisdom's  
3<sup>rd</sup> Call  
Proverbs 9

- **Life**
- Only to the Simple

### Three Calls of Folly

Folly's  
1<sup>st</sup> Call  
Proverbs 5

- **Condemnation**  
Scorners, Fool, Simple

Folly's  
2<sup>nd</sup> Call  
Proverbs 6

- **Poverty**
- Scorners, Fool, Simple

Folly's  
3<sup>rd</sup> Call  
Proverbs 7

- **Death**
- Scorners, Fool, Simple

| <b>The Results</b> |  |
|--------------------|--|
| <b>Scorner</b>     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rejected Wisdom</li> <li>• Listened to Folly</li> <li>• Received destruction</li> </ul> |
| <b>Fool</b>        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rejected Wisdom</li> <li>• Listened to Folly</li> <li>• Was led to death</li> </ul>     |
| <b>Simple</b>      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rejected Wisdom</li> <li>• Listened to Folly</li> <li>• Ended up in hell</li> </ul>     |

| <b>The Path of Wisdom</b> |  |
|---------------------------|--|
| <b>Chapter 2</b>          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wisdom <i>protects</i> our paths (Prov 2:8-9).</li> </ul> |
| <b>Chapter 3</b>          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wisdom <i>directs</i> our paths (Prov 3:5-6).</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Chapter 4</b>          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wisdom <i>perfects</i> our paths (Prov 4:18).</li> </ul>  |

### Wisdom protects our paths

- When we follow Wisdom, He protects our paths.

*He keepeth the paths of judgment, and preserveth the way of his saints. Then shalt thou understand righteousness, and judgment, and equity; yea, every good path.*

Proverbs 2:8-9

### Wisdom directs our paths

- When we follow Wisdom, He directs our paths.

*Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.*

Proverbs 3:5-6

### Wisdom perfects our paths

- When we follow Wisdom, He perfects our paths.

*But the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.*

Proverbs 4:18

### Key messages from Proverbs

- We cannot avoid decisions
- Sin is always alluring
- It takes time for judgment to fall
- Satan appeals to the flesh
  - The “wicked woman” (or “strange woman”) is appealing to the young man’s appetites. She tells him he can use his body as he pleases and not suffer for it.
  - Sexual sin leads to tragic results, both in body and soul.



### Key messages from Proverbs

- God continues to call
  - So long as people will hear, God's Spirit continues to call. But when sinners refuse to obey, their ears become deaf to the Word of God. Beware!
  - "Today, if you will hear His voice, do not harden your hearts" Heb. 3:7ff
- Sexual Sin Will Disappoint

49

### Key messages from Proverbs

- Sexual Sin Will Disappoint. The experience goes:
  - from sweetness to bitterness (Pro. 5:1–6)

**The Book of Proverbs emphasizes that we should look ahead to where our actions will lead us.**

### Key messages from Proverbs

- Sexual Sin Will Disappoint. The experience goes:
  - from sweetness to bitterness (Pro. 5:1–6)
  - from gain to loss (Pro 5:7–14)

**Temptation always includes hopeful promises; otherwise, people wouldn't take the devil's bait. But when we do, we find that sin is the most expensive thing in the world.**

### Key messages from Proverbs

- Sexual Sin Will Disappoint. The experience goes:
  - from sweetness to bitterness (Pro. 5:1–6)
  - from gain to loss (Pro 5:7–14)
  - from purity to pollution (Pro 5:15–20)

**Sex within marriage is a beautiful river  
that brings life and refreshment,  
but sex outside marriage is a sewer  
that defiles everything it touches.**

(1 Corinthians 7:1-5; Ephesians 22-23)

### Key messages from Proverbs

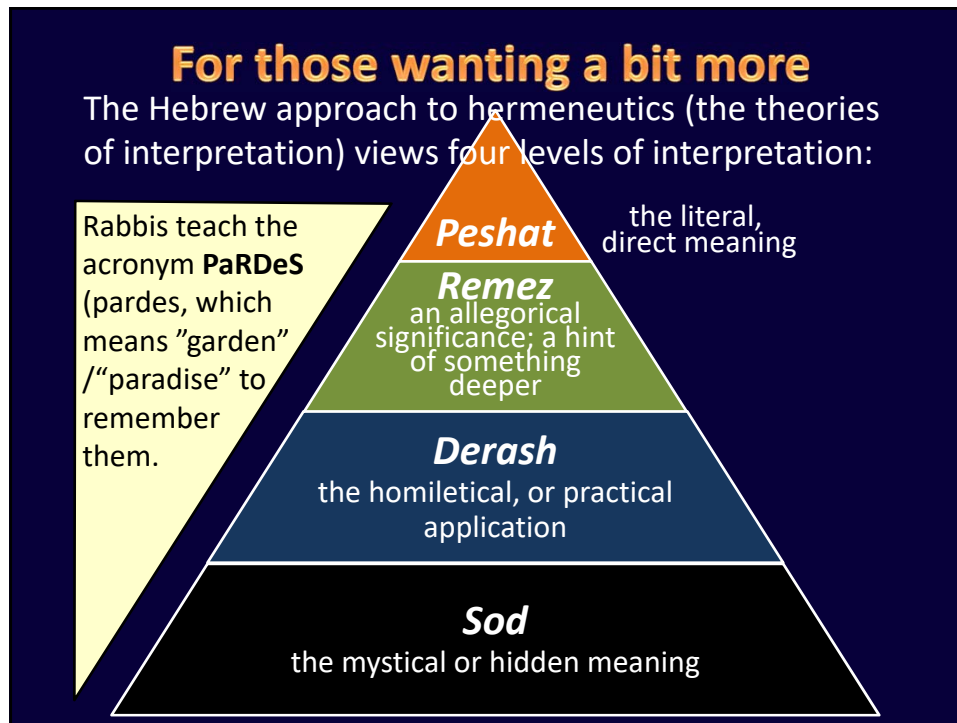
- Sexual Sin Will Disappoint. The experience goes:
  - from sweetness to bitterness (Pro. 5:1–6)
  - from gain to loss (Pro 5:7–14)
  - from purity to pollution (Pro 5:15–20)
  - from freedom to bondage (Pro 5:21–23)

**The kind of bondage which can't easily be broken.**

(John 8:34; Romans 6:16)

### Key messages from Proverbs

- Sexual Sin always results in losses:
  - They lose the Word of God (Pro 6:20–24)
  - They lose wealth (Pro 6:25–26)
  - They lose enjoyment (Pro 6:27–31)
  - They lose their good sense (Pro 6:32)
  - They lose their peace (Pro 6:33–35)



- 1 Peshat.** "*plain*" ("*simple*") or the direct, *literal* meaning.
- 2 Remez.** "*hints*" or the *deep* (allegoric) meaning beyond just the literal sense.
- 3 Derash.** From Hebrew *darash*: "*inquire*" ("*seek*"). The comparative (*midrashic*) meaning, as given through similar occurrences.
- 4 SOD.** "*secret*" ("*mystery*") or the mystical **KABBALAH** meaning.

*"The Garden of Eden"* by Thomas Cole (c. 1828)

## PaRDeS example: Proverbs 30:1

*The words of Agur the son of Jakeh, even the prophecy:  
the man spake unto Ithiel, even unto Ithiel and Ucal,*

|  |  |   |
|--|--|---|
| אגור<br>Agur                                       | Agur ("to collect") is the author of this Proverb. <b>Solomon</b> (aka Koheleth ("preacher", "assembler")) collected wise ("dark") sayings.            | 1 |
| בן־יָקֵחַ<br>Son of Jakeh                          | <b>Jakeh</b> ("carefully religious," "obedient," or "pious") was the father of Agur (Solomon), and would thus be <b>David</b> .                        | 2 |
| הַמְּשָׁאָה הַגְּבִירָה<br>הַמְּשָׁאָה הַגְּבִירָה | " <b>Even the prophecy the man spake</b> ": the Hebrew is <i>ha massa</i> (the burden) <i>ne'um</i> (oracle or prophecy) <i>ha-gebber</i> (the mighty) | 3 |
| יְחִיאל<br>Ithiel                                  | <b>Ithiel</b> , "God comes, arrives, is with me;" is equivalent to Immanuel, "God with us," a name of <b>Jesus</b> .                                   | 4 |
| אֲכָל<br>Ucal                                      | <b>Ucal</b> seems to be a verb, <i>`ukhal</i> , which means "to be consumed."  | 5 |

## PaRDeS example: Sod in Proverbs 30:1

*The words of Agur the son of Jakeh, even the prophecy:  
the man spake unto Ithiel, even unto Ithiel and Ucal,*

Substituting names and words from our simplistic translation, we see a possible Messanic allusion:

*The words gathered of the wise son of the pious father,  
the burden of the mighty prophecy, that El (God) arrives  
to be consumed.*

This has several levels of deeper meaning:

- It can refer to the suffering and death of Jesus on the Cross.
- It can refer to Jesus' Bread of Life discourse in John 6:51.

**Can you think of any other possibilities?**

### Key messages from Proverbs

*Who hath ascended up into heaven, or descended?  
 Who hath gathered the wind in his fists?  
 Who hath bound the waters in a garment?  
 Who hath established all the ends of the earth?  
 What is his name, and what is his son's name, if  
 thou canst tell?*

Proverbs 30:4

### Key messages from Proverbs

- “A virtuous woman is a crown to her husband” (12:4) “far above rubies” (31:10)
- “He who finds a wife finds a good thing, and obtains favor from the Lord” (18:22)
- “A prudent wife is from the Lord” (19:14)
- God hates, yes, hates a proud look (“Eyes of loftiness”)
- Strife is amplified by tale-bearing, pride and gossip.

### Key messages from Proverbs

- There are so many more relevant messages.
- The book could have been written for today!
- It's hard to do justice to such a sensational book of the Bible in a sermon.
- Even reading thoroughly doesn't touch its depth.
- But, never fear, Proverbs provides a study method that is truly inspired... there are 31 chapters in the book of Proverbs... one for each day of the month!
- Personal Discovery: the most relevant message may have been tailored to *your* specific day!

### Keep a Personal Proverbs Log

- Month #1
  - AM: Read the chapter for that date (1-31)
  - PM: Record the verse that proved to be the most relevant for that day.
- Month #2
  - Do the same
- Personal Discovery:
  - The most relevant may have been tailored to *your* specific day!