

Words of Wisdom (Part 3)

Introduction

In this final study on the book of Proverbs, we will only be able to 'sample' a few of the kinds of proverbs that make up the remainder of the book. As far as the structure of this remaining section is concerned, we can identify the following sub-divisions: '*the sayings of the wise*' (22vs17-24vs34) consisting of longer sayings and short poems; a *collection of Solomon's proverbs copied by the men of Hezekiah* (25vs1-29vs27); '*the sayings of Agur*' (30vs1-33) and '*the sayings of Lemuel*' (31vs1-9); and, finally, the '*Epilogue*' (31vs10-31) in which wisdom is once again personified as a woman, this time the wife of noble character.

In particular as far as this present study is concerned we want to focus on three specific kinds of proverbs or sayings – the so-called numerical proverbs e.g. Proverbs 30vs15-19, those proverbs which in their English translation invite comparisons e.g. Proverbs 25vs11-14 and those proverbs such as Proverbs 26vs4-5 which appear to contradict each other. In each case, as we shall see, the point is not so much the Proverb or saying itself – as valuable as these are – as the invitation to the reader to engage in the act of *thinking about life as we experience it on a day to day basis!*

Again, it is worth pointing out that although we will be selective in our study it is well worth reading Proverbs 22vs17-31vs31 as a whole to familiarise ourselves with this valuable part of God's Word.

Study Questions

These questions help you to see clearly what the text is saying.

Read: Proverbs 25vs12-26vs19

Note: The features of these proverbs as described above
The comparison that is being drawn in each proverb.

Answer the following questions:

1. What lessons are we to learn from each of these comparisons?

2. How can we resolve the apparent contradiction in Proverbs 26vs4-5?
What do you think is the main point of this proverb?

Read: Proverbs 30vs15-19

Answer the following questions:

1. What is the main lesson of each of these proverbs?

2. What other things can you add to these lists?

Think it Through _____

What main things have you learnt from this study?