

**GOLDEN WORDS FROM THE  
BOOK OF WISDOM**

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**BRARY OF RELIGIOUS THOUGHT**

## PREFACE

The Book of Proverbs is, perhaps, the least read of any of the books of the Bible. This is not because of its lack of worth or because it lacks in human interest, but, as we believe, because of its lack of consecutive treatment of subjects. The disconnected character of the book in its present form is, of course, very natural when we consider its title and origin. It is exactly what its title indicates, namely, a collection of Hebrew proverbs. They refer to a multitude of subjects but do not pretend to deal exhaustively or connectedly with any or scarcely any. There are, it is true, a few people who regard the Book of Proverbs as having a definite and studied arrangement of subject matter. But to the great majority of Bible students and readers, this view will not find acceptance either in reason or in the evidence furnished in the book itself.

The more likely and very evident method followed in the compilation of the book is that these incomparable proverbs were recorded, for the most part, as they were called to mind, or as they came into use, with little regard to subjects. Solomon, no doubt, is the author of a considerable number of these sayings, but doubtless many had other sources of origin, and found their way into current speech before his day. It would seem, however, that he recognized their value and had

them recorded or "written down in order" as they could be collected, a few today and a few tomorrow as they came to his notice. This collection made by the official scribe under the auspices of the King, gave the whole collection an official status and a recognition of sacred authority by ecclesiastical sanction of the day. Once having passed into the recognized canon of Hebrew scriptures, no re-editing of its contents would, of course, be permitted so far as the scriptures are concerned, and so they have ever remained in the original form.

In this somewhat haphazard order of arrangement, these gems of Hebrew wisdom will, of course, always continue, nor would we wish it otherwise. They have been spoken of as a string of costly gems of various sizes, shapes and colors made at random. In this form, they have a certain beauty and a sacred relationship which the world always will preserve. It is of interest, however, and, we think, of advantage sometimes to re-string these glittering gems according to a more systematic classification. This is merely what I have endeavored to do. A considerable portion of the book of Ecclesiastes consists of later proverbs woven into the story. Some of them I have included in this classification. No doubt the work of classification could have been better done by others, but I think my efforts in this direction may tend to a better knowledge of, and a wider popularity for, this most practical portion of the Sacred Scriptures.

Every people who have achieved any degree of civilization have a book of Proverbs, either written or oral. The value of these reflect, very largely, the degree and character of the civilization any people represent. Judged by this standard, ancient Israel was worthy of a high place. While the proverbs of all nations and all times are worthy of study, those of Israel's Philosopher-King never have been surpassed or equalled either in the variety of subjects referred to, or in the purity and exalted character of the ideals set forth. This is doubtless due to the spirit of Divine inspiration which gave them birth and led to their exalted place in their literature and their miraculous preservation to the present day.

If these grand truths, so strikingly expressed, could be burned into the minds and hearts of each rising generation, they could not help but supply a saner and more worthy outlook upon life. All the great essential truths of the moral life are here splendidly emphasized. No education is completed and no man or woman is fully fitted to fight the moral or material battles of life till these principles of life be at the foundation of their characters and their careers. In this new arrangement, my prayer is that they may be more highly appreciated and more widely read. If we need devotion for worship or history of ancient times, or revelation of God's message

and will to men, we turn to other sections of God's Word. But for a school of morals and the principles of material success, we must turn to these Golden Words from the Book of Wisdom.

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## CHAPTER IV

### THE A. B. C. OF WISDOM

**W**ISDOM hath builded her house, she hath hewn out her seven pillars; she hath killed her beasts; she hath mingled her wine; she hath also furnished her table. She hath sent forth her maidens; she crieth upon the highest places of the city:—"Whoso is simple, let him turn in hither." As for him that wanteth understanding, she saith to him: "Come, eat of my bread, and drink of the wine which I have mingled. Forsake the foolish, and live; and go in the way of understanding."

He that reproveth a scorner getteth to himself shame; and he that rebuketh a wicked man getteth himself a blot. Reprove not a scorner lest he hate thee; rebuke a wise man and he will love thee. Give instruction to a wise man, and he will be yet wiser; teach a just man, and he will increase in learning.

The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom; and the knowledge of the holy is understanding, For by me thy days shall be multiplied, and the years of thy life shall be increased. If thou be wise, thou shalt be wise for thyself; but if thou scornest, thou alone shall bear it. The fear of the



Lord is the beginning of knowledge, but fools despise wisdom and instruction.

My son, if thou wilt receive my words, and hide my commandments with thee, so that thou incline thine ear unto wisdom, and apply thine heart to understanding; yea, if thou criest after knowledge, and liftest up thy voice for understanding; if thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as hid treasures; then shalt thou understand the fear of the Lord, and find the knowledge of God. For the Lord giveth wisdom; out of his mouth cometh knowledge and understanding. He layeth up sound wisdom for the righteous; he is a buckler to them that walk uprightly. 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.

Bow down thine ear, and hear the words of the wise, and apply thine heart unto my knowledge. For it is a pleasant thing if thou keep them within thee; they shall withal be fitted in thy lips. That thy trust may be in the Lord, I have made known to thee this day, even to thee. Have I not written to thee excellent things in counsels and knowledge, that I might make thee know the certainty of the words of truth; that thou mightest answer the words of truth to them that send unto thee. The fear of the Lord tendeth to life; and he that hath it shall abide satisfied; he shall not be visited with evil.

## CHAPTER V

### FATHER, MOTHER, AND HOME

**W**HOSO findeth a wife findeth a good thing and obtaineth favour of the Lord. Go thy way, eat thy bread with joy, and drink thy wine with a merry heart, for God now accepteth thy works. Let thy garments be always white; and let thy head lack no ointment. Live joyfully with the wife whom thou lovest all the days of thy fleeting life which he hath given thee under the sun, all the days of thy fleeting life, for that is thy portion in life, and in thy labour which thou takest under the sun.

Drink waters out of thine own cistern, and running waters out of thine own well. Let thy fountains be dispersed abroad, and rivers of waters in the streets. Let them be only thine own, and not strangers' with thee. Let thy fountain be blessed; and rejoice with the wife of thy youth. Let her be as the loving hind and pleasant roe; let her breasts satisfy thee at all times; and be thou ravished always with her love. And why wilt thou, my son, be ravished with a strange woman, and embrace the bosom of a stranger? For the ways of man are before the eyes of the Lord, and he pondereth all his goings. As a bird that wandereth from her nest, so is a man that wandereth from his place. He that

troubleth his own house shall inherit the wind;  
and the fool shall be servant to the wise of heart.

The curse of the Lord is in the house of the wicked; but he blesseth the habitation of the just. Better is little with the fear of the Lord than great treasure and trouble therewith. Better is a dinner of herbs where love is, than a stalled ox and hatred therewith. The spirit of a man will sustain his infirmity; but a wounded spirit who can bear? Better is a dry morsel, and quietness therewith, than an house full of sacrifice with strife. It is better to dwell in the corner of the housetop than with a brawling woman and in a wide house. It is better to dwell in the wilderness, than with a contentious and an angry woman. A foolish son is the calamity of his father; and the contentions of a wife are a continual dropping. House and riches are the inheritance of fathers; and a prudent wife is from the Lord.

Who can find a virtuous woman? for her price is far above rubies. The heart of her husband doth safely trust in her, so that he shall have no need of spoil. She will do him good and not evil all the days of her life. She seeketh wool, and flax, and worketh willingly with her hands. She is like the merchants' ships; she bringeth her food from afar. She riseth also while it is yet night, and giveth meat to her household, and a portion to her maidens. She considereth a field, and buyeth it; with the fruit of her hands she planteth

a vineyard. She girdeth her loins with strength, and strengtheneth her arms.

She perceiveth that her merchandise is good; her candle goeth not out by night. She layeth her hands to the spindle, and her hands hold the distaff. She stretcheth out her hand to the poor; yea, she stretcheth forth her hands to the needy. She is not afraid of the snow for her household: for all her household are clothed with scarlet. She maketh herself coverings of tapestry; her clothing is silk and purple. Her husband is known in the gates, when he sitteth among the elders of the land. She maketh fine linen, and selleth it; delivereth girdles unto the merchant. Strength and honour are her clothing; and she shall rejoice in time to come.

She openeth her mouth with wisdom; and in her tongue is the law of kindness. She looketh well to the ways of her household, and eateth not the bread of idleness. Her children rise up, and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praiseth her. Many daughters have done virtuously, but thou excellest them all. Favour is deceitful, and beauty is vain: but a woman that feareth the Lord, she shall be praised. Give her of the fruit of her hands; and let her own works praise her in the gates.

A virtuous woman is a crown to her husband; but she that maketh ashamed is as rottenness in his bones. The Lord will destroy the house of the proud; but he will establish the border of the widow.

## CHAPTER VI

### HOME MAXIMS FOR THE HOME CIRCLE

**T**HE proverbs of Solomon: A wise son maketh a glad father; but a foolish son is the heaviness of his mother.

Hear, ye children, the instruction of a father, and attend to know understanding. For I give you good doctrine, forsake ye not my law. For I was my father's son, tender and only beloved in the sight of my mother. He taught me also and said unto me, Let thine heart retain my words; keep my commandments, and live.

Children's children are the crown of old men; and the glory of children are their fathers. The father of the righteous shall greatly rejoice; and he that begetteth a wise child shall have joy of him. Thy father and thy mother shall be glad, and she that bear thee shall rejoice. In the fear of the Lord is strong confidence; and his children shall have a place of refuge.

Whoso curseth his father or his mother, his lamp shall be put out in obscure darkness. A foolish son is a grief to his father, and bitterness to her that bare him. The just man walketh in his integrity; his children are blessed after him. The eye that mocketh at his father, and despiseth