

Proverbs 1:1-7

1 The proverbs of Solomon son of David, king of Israel: 2 for attaining wisdom and discipline; for understanding words of insight; 3 for acquiring a disciplined and prudent life, doing what is right and just and fair; 4 for giving prudence to the simple, knowledge and discretion to the young— 5 let the wise listen and add to their learning and let the discerning get guidance— 6 for understanding proverbs and parables, the sayings and riddles of the wise. 7 The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge, but fools despise wisdom and discipline.

What is the book of Proverbs?

- Largely (but not all – for example, see Proverbs 30:1) written by Solomon, son of Israel's greatest king, David.
- Solomon was a man given great wisdom by God (2 Chronicles 1:9-11). This book is about wisdom; about training (discipline) for life (v2). It is a book of God-given wisdom for living in God's creation. It shows us godliness in daily life. It is a book for all people and all of life. There are Proverbs for children and for the old. There are words for kings, for rich men and for the poor; for owners and servants. It gives rules for each person and for whole nations. It tells us about godly speaking, thinking and acting.

What is wisdom?

- Wisdom is not about being “clever”, passing exams, being brainy. Nor is Proverbs about how to “get on” in this life – how to get rich, how to enjoy an easy life; though its rules lead much more to those things than to trouble and poverty.

`So, what is living by wisdom? Verses 2-6 tell us. Wisdom means to live an upright life in the presence of God. It means to understand the world we are in, so that we can please our Maker in it, and avoid the condemnation that is coming on the ungodly. Many clever, rich people are not wise, but foolish; and poor people can be very wise.
- Verse 7 is a key for the whole book. True wisdom has a foundation. That foundation is the fear of God – to always be aware of him and his presence and his holiness. Nobody can truly understand this world without that. The opposite of wisdom is folly. In Proverbs, this means to forget God and live without him. Wisdom begins with repentance; being ready to be corrected and taught by God. Ultimately wisdom is to grow like and to know Christ, “in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge” (Col. 2:3). Wisdom is heavenly life upon God's earth.