

Proverbs

Welcome to the Beamsville Church of Christ Online Ministry. This week's message is titled Proverbs. Thank you to Geoff, Dianne, Rhonda, and Don for being part of the service. The scripture reading is Proverbs 1, 1 to 8. It was recorded in August, 2025 during the Hamas/Israel conflict.

Scripture Reading

Good morning everyone. The reading today is Proverbs 1-8. The Proverbs of Solomon, son of David, king of Israel. For gaining wisdom and instruction, for understanding words of insight, for receiving instruction and prudent behavior, doing what is right and just and fair. For giving prudence to those who are simple, knowledge and discretion to the young. Let the wise listen and add to their learning, and let the discerning get guidance. For understanding Proverbs and parables, the sayings and riddles of the wise. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge, but fools despise wisdom and instruction. Listen my son to your father's instruction and do not forsake your mother's teaching. Amen.

Sermon

Good morning, everyone. Thank you for being with us today. The book of Proverbs is a unique book, contains some 31 chapters. Many of the Proverbs were written by Solomon. And yet, there were lesser known people who wrote as well, a person by the name of Agar, and Lemuel, and Hezekiah, and others. Some 3,000 Proverbs came from Solomon himself. Some are philosophical, others theological. Many of them are brief, compact, and others of them are lengthy. And some of the Proverbs are churning and twisting. And some evaluate conduct. For example, but he who hates bribes will live there are consequences of those bribes. A wise son brings joy to his father. And do not sleep, or you will grow poor. And there is figurative language, like cold water to a weary soul is good news from a distant land. And better a poor man whose walk is blameless than a rich man whose ways are perverse.

So I don't know why it is, but I just imagine a scribe writing all of these things down. And where do they come from? Hopefully, of course, and I'm sure it is coming from God. And these are religious people, of course, spiritual people. And they're just putting forth these Proverbs that are really pretty cool. Proverbs were written to give prudence to the simple. Knowledge and direction and discretion to the young. And throughout the book, his reverence for God is set forth as the path to life and spiritual security. Recall the joyful bliss of the Garden of Eden, and figuratively say that one who finds wisdom will be blessed greatly. Proverbs condemns the quarrelsome wife, and I suppose quarrelsome husband. The home is supposed to be a place of love and not dissension. Discipline is necessary for our well-bearing being. And to encourage honesty and justice, those who are kind to the needy will be richly blessed. God is sovereign over all the kings of the earth. And all history moves forward under his control. And that is true to this very day.

Chapter 1, the purpose and theme for attaining wisdom and discipline, for understanding words of insight, for acquiring a disciplined, prudent life, doing what is right. Listen, my son, to your fathers and their instruction. Don't forget your mother's teaching. Don't reject wisdom. How long will you simple ones love only your simple ways? How long will mockers delight in mockery and fools hate

knowledge? But since you rejected me when I called and no one gave heed, when I stretched out my hand, since you ignored all my advice, I in turn understand how you have come to disaster. How do you like it so far?

It really is a challenge that over the years, these words are being written over and over again. Basically, it's a book of wisdom and the benefits of wisdom. My son, don't forget my teaching, but keep my commands in your heart, for they will prolong your life many years and bring you prosperity. And then this scripture that probably many of us know so very well. Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not rely on your own understanding, but in all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight. And then in verse 11, my son, do not despise the Lord's discipline, and do not resent his rebuke, because the Lord disciplines those he loves, as a father delights in his son. And then in chapter 5, he says, my son, pay attention to what I say. Listen closely to my words. Don't let them get out of your sight. Keep them within your heart, for they are life to those. Above all else, guard your heart, for it's the wellspring of life.

So I just stop for a minute and think, wow, these were written thousands and thousands of years ago, and the wisdom is still with us today. I got reading through some of these wonderful scriptures that are in Proverbs. There are too many for me to write them all. I would just suggest, when you do have a chance, to just read the Proverbs. And it really is a very unique, challenging sometimes, and curious book. Proverbs 6, there are six things the Lord hates, seven that are detestable to him. Haughty eyes, lying tongue, hands that shed innocent blood, a heart that devises wicked schemes, feet that are quick to rush into evil. False witness who pours out lies, and a person who stirs up dissension among the brothers.

Then in chapter 8, beginning in verse 22, the Lord brought me forth as the first of his works. Before his deeds of old, I was appointed from eternity, from the beginning, before the world began, where there were no oceans. I was given birth, where there were no springs abounding with water before the mountains, settled in place before the hills. I was given birth through all of these things. So he goes back, imagining what it was like as the world first began. And then he kind of chronicles all the way through the ages, trying to put some wisdom in all of these different ages. There's a way that seems right to a man. In the end, it leads to death. Even in laughter, the heart may ache, and joy may end in grief. The faithless will be fully repaid for their ways, and the good man rewarded for his. A wise person fears the Lord and shuns evil, but a fool is hotheaded and reckless. A quick-tempered person does foolish things, and a crafty man is hated. Do not trust those who plot evil or go astray, but those who plan what is good find love and faithfulness. And then he says, all hard work brings profit, but mere talk leads only to poverty.

And then in chapter 15-- and I think many of us have heard this before-- it is precious. A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger. The tongue of the wise commands knowledge, but the mouth of the fool gushes folly. The eyes of the Lord are everywhere, keeping watch on the wicked and the good. The tongue that brings healing is a tree of life, but a deceitful tongue crushes the spirit.

So I just imagine these names that we've mentioned who are writing these things. In Solomon-- and I don't know that it's true, but I can picture him with a great big book, and he's writing these things out over and over and over again. And what is unique is that Jesus would have read them.

Probably many of the apostles read them. Probably many people 2,000 years ago have read them. And look, we're doing it today. We're reading it. Very same words.

"The Lord detests all the proud heart. Be sure of this. They will not go unpunished. Through love and faithfulness, sin is atoned for. Through the fear of the Lord, a person avoids evil. In his heart, a man plans his course. But it's the Lord who determines his steps." And then in chapter 17, kind of a strange thing, "Better a dry crust with peace and quiet than a house full of feasting with strife," which, of course, is true. In all of these words, I just think-- and I don't think we're saying anything new, but it's just a reminder of all this. "Better a dry crust with peace and quiet than a house full of feasting with strife. A friend loves at all times. And a brother is born for adversity.

A man lacking in judgment strikes hands in pledge and puts up security for his neighbor. He who loves a quarrel loves sin." So we stay away from quarreling. And then in chapter 18 and verse 10, "The name of the Lord is a strong tower. The righteous run to it, and they are safe. A man of many companions may come to ruin, but there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother." And many of us experience that.

Then in chapter 19 and verse 17, "He who was kind to the poor lends to the Lord, and he will reward him for what he has done." The chapter 20, "Wine is a mocker and beer a brawler. Whoever is led astray by them is not wise." And then in chapter 21, "When justice is done, it brings joy to the righteous. But terror to evildoers, a man who strays from the path of understanding, comes to rest in the company of the dead." Very strong language. Then in chapter 22, "A good man is more desirable than great riches, to be esteemed better than silver or gold. Rich and poor has this in common. The Lord is the maker of them all." And then in chapter 23, "Do not join those who drink too much wine or gorge themselves with meat, for drunkards and gluttons become poor, and drowsiness clothes them in rags. Listen to your father who gave you life, and do not despise your mother when she is older. Buy the truth, and don't sell the truth. Get wisdom, get discipline and understanding. The father of a righteous man has great joy. He who has a son and a wise son delights in him. May your father and mother be glad, and glad that she gave birth to you and rejoice."

Again, chapter 24, "Eat honey, my son, for it's good. Honey from the comb is sweet to your taste. Know also that wisdom is sweet to your soul if you find it. There is a future hope for you, and your hope will never be cut off because of your wisdom." And then in chapter 25, "If your enemy is hungry, give him food to eat. If he is thirsty, give him water to drink. In doing so, you will heap burning coals on his head, and the Lord will reward you." And then in chapter 26, "As charcoal to embers, and as wood to fire, so is a quarrelsome person for kindling strife." Chapter 27, "Do not boast about tomorrow, for you do not know what a day might bring forth. Let another praise you, but not your own lips. Stone is heavy, and sand a burden, but provocation by a fool is heavier than both." Chapter 28, "The wicked man flees, though no one pursues. But the righteous are as bold as a lion. When a country is rebellious, it has many rulers, but a person of understanding and knowledge maintains order and peace." Chapter 29, "When the righteous thrive, the people rejoice. When the wicked rule, the people groan. A man who loves wisdom brings joy to his father." And then in chapter 30, "I am the most ignorant of men. I do not have man's understanding. I have not learned wisdom, nor have I no knowledge of the Holy One, who has gone up to heaven and then come down, who has gathered up the wind in the hollow of his hands, who has wrapped up

the waters in his cloak, who has established all the ends of the earth." What is his name? And what is the name of his son? Tell me if you know. Every word of God is flawless. He is a shield to those who take refuge in him. Do not add to his words, or he will rebuke you and prove you as a liar.

And then the last chapter, 31, "A wife of noble character, who can find? She is worth far more than rubies. Her husband has full confidence in her and lacks nothing value. She brings him good, not harm, all the days of her life. She selects wool and flax and works with eager hands. She's like the merchant ships bringing her food from afar. She gets up while it's still dark. She provides food for her family and portions for her servant girls. She considers a field and buys it out of her own earnings. She plants a vineyard. She sets about her work vigorously. Her arms are strong for her tasks. She sees that her trading is profitable, and her lamp does not go out at night." Verse 20, "She opens her arms to the poor and again extends her hands to the needy." Verse 25, "She's clothed with strength and dignity. She can laugh at the days to come. She speaks with wisdom, and faithful instruction is on her tongue. She watches over the affairs of her household. She does not eat the bread of idleness." And then I love this as we conclude. "Her children arise and call her blessed. Her husband also, and he praises her. Many women do noble things, but you, you surpass them all. Charm is deceptive and beauty is fleeting, but a woman who fears the Lord is to be praised. Give her the reward she has earned, and let her works bring her praise to the city gate."

The words of Solomon.

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