

# **"Uncommon Sense" from Proverbs 10-22 (Introduction)**

Sunday Evening, September 27, 2026 – WOCC – Rich Howell

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## **BOOK INTRODUCTION:**

- 1) A proverb is a short, pithy statement of wisdom, wit or irony. Written proverbs date back to Hammurabi (2000 BC), and were also prevalent in the ancient cultures of the Far East – most notably in the writings and recorded annals of Confucius (551-479 BC?).*
- 2) The Hebrew word for proverb (mashal) is defined as "A rule in the form of similitude, representation or comparison." Proverbs are rules for living right before God and man. And these rules are not merely stated, they are often illustrated with clear, concise pictures from everyday life.*
- 3) According to 1 Kings 3:7-15 and 4:29-34, we learn that God gave King Solomon (971-931 BC) a degree of wisdom beyond all who have ever lived (except for Jesus – Mat 12:42!). We also learn that Solomon wrote 3,000 proverbs (of which 800-900 are recorded in this book, and another 100 or so in Ecclesiastes). He also wrote 1005 songs, which most likely include the Song of Songs!*
- 4) I've heard it said that Proverbs is just a book of good old fashioned "common sense" but I prefer calling this inspired collection "Uncommon Sense!" What we read in this book is a higher wisdom that Yahweh God graciously gave to King Solomon to enlighten, guide and bless all wisdom-seeking people of every generation!*

## **I. (1:1-7) INTRODUCTION**

-  (1:1) BOOK TITLE, AUTHORSHIP (*See also 10:1; 22:17-23; 25:1; 30:1; 31:1*)
-  (1:2-6) BOOK OBJECTIVES
-  (1:7) BOOK PREMISE (*See also 9:10; Job 28:28*)

## **II. (1:8-9:18) SOLOMON'S WISE SAYINGS ABOUT WISDOM**

*A series of 16 "fatherly" discourses on the virtues of wisdom.*

1. (1:8-19) BAD COMPANY
2. (1:20-23) THE CRY OF WISDOM
3. (2:1-22) THE BLESSINGS OF WISDOM
4. (3:1-18) THE PATH TO WISDOM
5. (3:19-26) THE SECURITY OF WISDOM
6. (3:27-35) WISE DEALINGS
7. (4:1-27) THE LEGACY OF WISDOM
8. (5:1-23) THE WISDOM OF SEXUAL PURITY
9. (6:1-5) SETTLING SERIOUS DEBTS
10. (6:6-11) ADMONITION TO THE LAZY
11. (6:12-19) THE LORD'S HATE LIST
12. (6:20-35) THE FOLLY OF ADULTERY
13. (7:1-27) THE WAYS OF ADULTERY
14. (8:1-21) WISDOM PERSONIFIED
15. (8:22-36) THE ORIGIN OF WISDOM
16. (9:1-18) WISE WOMAN VS. FOOLISH WOMAN

- III. (10:1-22:16) SOLOMON'S WISE SAYINGS ABOUT \_\_\_\_\_** – 375 “Distichs” (Two line sayings, couplets) covering virtually every relationship and aspect of daily living.
- 1) \_\_\_\_\_ = 2<sup>nd</sup> line restates 1<sup>st</sup> for emphasis or clarity – a common feature of Hebrew poetry and prophecy, called a “parallelism.” The 2<sup>nd</sup> phrase typically begins with the conjunction “and.” (12:28; 16:26,28,29; 17:27-28; 19:5,6,9)
  - 2) \_\_\_\_\_ = Most common type found in Proverbs. 2<sup>nd</sup> line stands in contrast to the 1<sup>st</sup>, using the conjunction “but”. (10:1-7, 19; 11:4; 13:3; 14:12; 15:1; 16:2; 17:22)
  - 3) \_\_\_\_\_ = 2<sup>nd</sup> line adds a new thought to reinforce or expand the idea of the 1<sup>st</sup>, sometimes using the word “and.” (11:30; 12:14, 28; 14:26; 15:3; 16:3,6; 18:15-17,21)
  - 4) \_\_\_\_\_ = Uses a common illustration to emphasize or clarify the point. Employs helping words “as” or “like” (10:26; 11:22,28; 12:18; 16:24; 17:14; 18:19; 25:11; 26:1)
  - 5) \_\_\_\_\_ = Uses a concrete picture to explain an abstract idea—with or without helping words, could also be called “metaphoric proverbs.” (11:25; 17:3; 26:6-11)
  - 6) \_\_\_\_\_ = Uses the words “Better ... than” (15:16-17; 16:8,16,19,32; 17:10; 19:1,22; 27:5!)
  - 7) \_\_\_\_\_ = The 2<sup>nd</sup> line completes the idea of the 1<sup>st</sup> (16:3,5,7,12; 18:9; 19:27; 20:4; 21:3,23) See #3 “synthetic”
  - 8) \_\_\_\_\_ = Life’s little paradoxes as seen through Solomon’s God-given wisdom (11:8,24; 13:4,7) These often overlap with “antithetic” proverbs.
- IV. (22:17-24:22) “THE WORDS OF THE \_\_\_\_\_”** – 30 extended proverbs (more than two lines)—including “Ode to the Drunkard”! (23:29-35)
- V. (24:23-34) \_\_\_\_\_ “SAYINGS OF THE WISE”** – 3 extended proverbs—ending with “Ode to the Sluggard”! (24:30-34)
- VI. (25:1-29:27) MORE “PROVERBS OF SOLOMON COMPILED BY THE MEN OF \_\_\_\_\_”** – 120 sayings – some distichs and some extended proverbs, including some great advice on keeping peace and good-will in our relationships (25:9-10,17,21-22); and, the truth about gossip and hatred. (26:17-28)
- VII. (30:1-33) “THE WORDS OF AGUR** (whose name means “He who \_\_\_\_\_”) The author (perhaps King Solomon, under the pen name of Agur) gathers wisdom and puts it into short numbered categories or lists, including the “two things” he would ask God (30:7-9)!
- VIII. (31:1-31) “THE WORDS OF KING LEMUEL**(whose name means “\_\_\_\_\_ to God”), **WHICH HIS \_\_\_\_\_ TAUGHT HIM”** – Again, possibly King Solomon writing under the pen name Lemuel. Wisdom regarding when to close your mouth and when to open it! Ends with a marvelous 22-verse “acrostic/alphabetical” poem about “The Virtuous Woman,” or “An Excellent Wife.” (31:10-31)