

"Uncommon Sense" from The Proverbs—About The Tongue

Sunday Evening, October 11, 2026 – WOCC – Rich Howell

BOOK OUTLINE:

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.

III. (10:1-22:16) SOLOMON'S WISE SAYINGS ABOUT LIFE – 375 “Distichs” (Two line sayings, couplets) covering virtually every relationship and aspect of daily living.

- 1) **SYNONOMOUS** = 2nd line restates 1st for emphasis or clarity – a common feature of Hebrew poetry and prophecy, called a “parallelism.” The 2nd phrase typically begins with the conjunction “and.” (12:28; 16:26,28,29; 17:27-28; 19:5,6,9)
- 2) **ANTITHETIC** = Most common type found in Proverbs. 2nd line stands in contrast to the 1st, using the conjunction “but”. (10:1-7, 19; 11:4; 13:3; 14:12; 15:1; 16:2; 17:22)
- 3) **SYNTHETIC** = 2nd line adds a new thought to reinforce or expand the idea of the 1st, sometimes using the word “and.” (11:30; 12:14, 28; 14:26; 15:3; 16:3,6; 18:15-17,21)
- 4) **SIMILITUDE** = 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) **PARABOLIC** = 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) **COMPARATIVE** = Uses the words “Better ... than” (15:16-17; 16:8,16,19,32; 17:10; 19:1,22; 27:5!)
- 7) **INTEGRAL** = The 2nd line completes the idea of the 1st (16:3,5,7,12; 18:9; 19:27; 20:4; 21:3,23) See #3 “synthetic”
- 8) **IRONIC** = 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 WISE” – 30 extended proverbs (more than two lines)—including “Ode to the Drunkard”! (23:29-35)

V. (24:23-34) MORE “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 HEZEKIAH” – 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 gathers”) 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 “Devoted to God”), **WHICH HIS MOTHER 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 “An Excellent Wife.”

EVENING DEVOTION: "SPEECH THERAPY"—Proverbs about "the tongue"

Last Sunday evening we considered our "heart health" and how to "keep our hearts." This evening we move up from the heart to the mouth (which are very closely related, btw! Prov 4:23-24; Mat 12:33-34). So let's get some "speech therapy" from a higher authority ...

1) *MANY WORDS ABOUT OUR WORDS! The Proverbs contains a total of _____ references re: our speech, with occurrences in every chapter! Here is a breakdown of the vocabulary used, the frequency of each word, and a "sample" of its usage:*

☞ _____ (46 times/10:11; 11:9; 18:4)

☞ _____ (37 times/10:19; 15:26)

☞ _____ (33 times/10:13,32; 12:13,19,22)

☞ _____ (19 times/6:17; 10:20,31)

☞ _____ (12 times/4:24; 16:21,23,27)

☞ _____ (5 times/4:24)

2) *THE MORE WE TALK ... The stat: On average, we speak between ___k and ___k words per day! The sobering truth: Prov 10:19a "With _____ words, _____ is not lacking," The wise choice: Prov 10:19b "but whoever _____ his lips is prudent." And, Prov 21:23 "Whoever _____ his mouth and his tongue _____ himself out of _____." (See James 1:19; Prov 13:3; 29:20;)*

3) *"TALK IS _____?" No, actually, TALK IS _____ (Prov 18:21) "_____ and _____ are in the power of the tongue ..."*

☞ For _____—What great _____ our words can do!
Prov 6:16-19; 11:9,13; 12:18a; 16:28; 26:28; James 3:1-10!

☞ For _____—What great _____ our words can do!
Prov 10:11a,20-21; 4:10-13,20-24; 10: 12:18b; 14:25; 15:4,23

☞ In Eph 4:25-27,29-31, Paul writes about both sides of the tongue's power.

(4) *TAKE-AWAY'S*

☞ Two good prayers to make: (Psalm 141:3; 19:14)

☞ One big step to take: Let's _____ our _____ to God, for His _____ uses and purposes. (Rom 6:12-13)