

## Job, Psalms, Proverbs

Thus begins the five “\_\_\_\_\_” books of the Old Testament (Job, Psalms, proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Song of Solomon). They are referred to as poetical because they are not really history or doctrinal (books for the head), but rather, books for the heart. They basically are written from the heart too!

### Job

**Author:** The Book of Job was written by a man named \_\_\_\_\_ (Job 32:16).

**Date of Writing:** The date of the writing of the Book of Job would be around 1900 B.C. because it matches the lifestyle of the time of Abraham. The writer readily knew of the sins of Adam (Job 31:33)

**Purpose of Writing:** The name Job means “Persecuted”. The Book of Job helps us to understand the following: Satan cannot bring financial and physical destruction upon us unless it is by God's permission. God has power over what Satan can and cannot do. It is beyond our human ability to understand the "why's" behind all the suffering in the world. The wicked will receive their just dues. We cannot always blame our suffering and sin on our lifestyles. Suffering may sometimes be allowed in our lives to purify, test, teach or strengthen the soul. God remains God, and deserves and requests our love and praise in all circumstances of life.

**Key Verses:** Job 1:1; Job 1:21; Job 2:10; Job 32:9; Job 38:1-2; Job 42:5-6

#### Key People in the Books:

- Job
- Job's 10 children (7 boys and 3 girls)
- Job's wife – not named, but even though she gets very discouraged, is blessed in the end
- Satan
- God Almighty – He will actually speak as face to face with Job and his three “friends”
- Eliphaz
- Bildad
- Zophar
- Elihu

**Brief Summary:** Why do the righteous suffer? This is the question raised after Job loses his family, his wealth, and his health. Job's 3 friends, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_, come to comfort him and to discuss his crushing series of tragedies. They insist his suffering is punishment for sin in his life. Job, though, remains devoted to God through all of this and contends that his life has not been one of sin. A fourth man, \_\_\_\_\_, tells Job he needs to humble himself and submit to God's use of trials to purify his life. Finally, Job questions God Himself and learns valuable lessons about the sovereignty of God and his need to totally trust in the Lord. Job is then restored to health, happiness and prosperity beyond his earlier state.

**Practical Application:** Don't get angry at God, no matter what happens in your life. Use problems to strengthen your character and bring glory to God. Refuse to be proud. Do you feel like God has left you to face your problems alone? Trust God to work in your life day by day. Let God be your source of security.

#### Simple Outline of the Book of Job

##### I. Introduction Material (1:1-2:13)

- A. Introduction (1:1-5)
- B. First Test (1:6-22) – Loss of Material Possessions and Children
  1. Heavenly agreement to test Job (1:6-12)
  2. Job loses possessions and children (1:13-19)
  3. Job mourns (1:20-22)

## C. Second test (2:1-10) – Loss of Personal Health

1. Heavenly agreement to test Job further (2:1-6)
2. Job loses his health (2:7-8)
3. Job's wife suggests cursing God (2:9)
4. Job accepts bad with good (2:10) - one of the greatest statements in the Bible!

D. Job's three friends arrive (2:11-13) – they just sit and wait for 7 days!**II. Job Curses the Day He Was Born (3:1-26)****III. Three Cycles of Speeches (4:1-31:40)**A. **First cycle (4:1-14:22)**

1. Eliphaz (4:1-5:27)
  - a. Job does not follow own advice (4:1-6)
  - b. Righteous do not perish (4:7-11)
  - c. None is righteous but God (4:12-21)
  - d. Fools suffer (5:1-7)
  - e. God makes all things right (5:8-16)
  - f. God is disciplining Job (5:17-27)
2. Job (6:1-7:21)
  - a. My condition (6:1-7)
  - b. Please finish me off, God! (6:8-13)
  - c. Worthlessness of friends (6:14-27)
  - d. Look at me! (6:28-30)
  - e. My horrible condition (7:1-6)
  - f. My life is almost over (7:7-10)
  - g. Why is God obsessed with humans? (7:11-21)
3. Bildad (8:1-22)
  - a. God is just, Job's children were sinful (8:1-7)
  - b. Look to traditional wisdom (8:8-10)
  - c. Those who forget God are destroyed (8:11-19)
  - d. God will restore Job (8:20-22)
4. Job (9:1-10:22)
  - a. Who can be just before God? (9:1-12)
  - b. Who can answer God? (9:13-24)
  - c. No alternative to condemnation (9:25-35)
  - d. Why does God torture humans? (10:1-17)
  - e. Why was I born? (10:18-22)
5. Zophar (11:1-20)
  - a. God exacts less than Job deserves (11:1-6)
  - b. Can you know? (11:7-12)
  - c. Repent and God will restore (11:13-20)
6. Job (12:1-14:22)
  - a. Traditional wisdom does not explain real life (12:1-6)
  - b. Everything knows God's power and involvement (12:7-12)
  - c. No one can withstand God (12:13-25)
  - d. Do not defend God (13:1-12)
  - e. I will defend myself (13:13-19)

- f. May God leave me alone and remove dread (13:20-28)
- g. Let humans rest (14:1-6)
- h. Death ends all (14:7-17)
- i. God destroys hope (14:18-22)

**B. Second cycle (15:1-21:34)**

1. Eliphaz (15:1-35)
  - a. Job condemns himself (15:1-6)
  - b. Doesn't Job know none are righteous? (15:7-16)
  - c. The wicked suffer constantly and are doomed (15:17-35)
2. Job (16:1-17:16)
  - a. Miserable comforters (16:1-5)
  - b. God has attacked an innocent person (16:6-17)
  - c. A cry for justice (16:18-22)
  - d. Hope is gone (17:1-16)
3. Bildad (18:1-21)
  - a. We have wisdom too (18:1-4)
  - b. Surely God punishes the wicked (18:5-21)
4. Job (19:1-29)
  - a. I feel rejected by God, family, and friends (19:1-22)
  - b. I know my redeemer lives and vindication will come (19:23-29)
5. Zophar (20:1-29)
  - a. The wicked prosper only for a short time (20:1-11)
  - b. The wicked will eventually be destroyed (20:12-29)
6. Job (21:1-34)
  - a. The wicked do prosper all their lives (21:1-16)
  - b. How often are the wicked really punished? (21:17-26)
  - c. Haven't you heard stories that contradict your wisdom? (21:27-34)

**C. Third Cycle (22:1-28:28)**

1. Eliphaz (22:1-30)
  - a. Can anyone help or hurt God? (22:1-4)
  - b. Job's wickedness is great (22:5-11)
  - c. God watches and punishes (22:12-20)
  - d. Repent and be saved (22:21-30)
2. Job (23:1-24:25)
  - a. God might answer if I could find him (23:1-7)
  - b. I cannot find God (23:8-9)
  - c. God can certainly find me! (23:10)
  - d. I have followed His ways (23:11-12)
  - e. God has determined to destroy me (23:13-14)
  - f. I am terrified of God (23:15-17)
  - g. Why is there such great violence and injustice? (24:1-25)
3. Bildad (25:1-6)

- a. God's power is great (25:1-3)
  - b. Who can be righteous before God? (25:4-6)
4. Job (26:1-31:40)
- a. God's power is frightening (26:1-14)
  - b. I maintain my integrity (27:1-6)
  - c. The godless have no hope (27:7-12)
  - d. The wicked are punished (27:13-23)
  - e. Where is wisdom (28:1-28)
    - 1) Miners' work, though hidden from most, can be seen (28:1-11)
    - 2) Wisdom cannot be found (28:12-14)
    - 3) Wisdom cannot be purchased (28:15-19)
    - 4) The living and dead cannot find wisdom (28:20-22)
    - 5) God knows wisdom's location (28:23-27)
    - 6) To fear God is wisdom (28:28)
  - f. I wish I were back in my younger days (29:1-25)
  - g. Now I am mocked (30:1-15)
  - h. God has tortured me (30:16-23)
  - i. No needy person should suffer like me (30:24-31)
  - j. Final challenge (31:1-40a)
    - 1) I have tried to live right (31:1-4)
    - 2) I have not lied (31:5-8)
    - 3) I have not committed adultery (31:9-12)
    - 4) I have not mistreated my servants (31:13-15)
    - 5) I have been charitable (31:16-23)
    - 6) I have not been materialistic (31:24-28)
    - 7) I have not been spiteful (31:29-32)
    - 8) I have not concealed my sin (31:33-34)
    - 9) If only God would listen (31:35-37)
    - 10) I have not abused my tenant farmers (31:38-40a)
  - k. Conclusion of Job's speeches (31:40b)

#### IV. Elihu's Wisdom (32:1-37:24)

##### A. Introduction (32:1-5)

- 1. Job's three friends cease speaking because Job believed himself to be righteous (32:1)
- 2. Elihu is angry... (32:2-5)
  - a. With Job because he justified himself rather than God (32:2)
  - b. With the friends because they could not answer Job (32:3)
  - c. Because he had maintained silence due to his youth (32:4)
  - d. Now he is angry enough to speak (32:5)

##### B. Elihu's comments (32:6-37:24)

- 1. Wisdom is dependent on spirit, not age (32:6-10)
- 2. I will provide my answer (32:11-22)
- 3. I am human, so Job has no need to fear (33:1-7)
- 4. Job declares himself innocent and God guilty (33:8-11)
- 5. How God works with people (33:12-33)
  - a. Teaches through dreams (33:12-18)
  - b. Teaches through pain (33:19-22)
  - c. Intercessory prayer (33:23-26)
  - d. Testimony of others (33:27-28)

- e. God constantly teaches in these ways to save people (33:29-30)
  - f. Job should listen (33:31-32)
6. Job has questioned theological beliefs (34:1-9)
  7. God is righteous and punishes wicked (34:10-34)
  8. Job should face further trials for daring to rebel (34:35-37)
  9. God is not helped or hurt by humans (35:1-8)
  10. Job's pride makes his cries empty (35:9-16)
  11. God blesses the righteous and destroys the wicked (36:1-16)
  12. Job is obsessed with the wicked prospering (36:17-20)
  13. Job must avoid becoming wicked (36:21-23)
  14. God's power is great (36:24-37:13)
  15. Can Job (or anyone) understand God or equal His power? (37:14-24)

## V. God Speaks with Job (38:1-42:9)

- A. God's first speech (38:1-40:2)
  1. God's voice from the whirlwind questions Job (38:1-3)
  2. Series of questions emphasizing God's knowledge and power (38:4-39:30)
  3. Job is asked to respond (40:1-2)
- B. Job humbly responds (40:3-5)
- C. God's second speech (40:6-41:34)
  1. Will Job condemn God? (40:6-9)
  2. Try being God (40:10-41:34)
    - a. Try running the world in complete justice (40:10-14)
    - b. Try controlling Behemoth (40:15-24)
    - c. Try controlling Leviathan (41:1-34)
- D. Job responds (42:1-6)
  1. No one can thwart God (42:1-2)
  2. I do not understand (42:3)
  3. Job will question and God will answer (42:4)
  4. Job now has encountered God (42:5)
  5. Job's final response - repentance or defiance? (42:6)
- E. God speaks regarding the three friends (42:7-9)
  1. Friends have not spoken correctly of God as Job has (42:7)
  2. Friends must offer a sacrifice and Job will intercede for them (42:8)
  3. Friends offer a sacrifice and God accepts Job's prayer for them (42:9)

## VI. Conclusion (42:10-17)

- A. God restores Job's Fortunes and Life (42:10-16)
  1. God gives Job twice as many possessions as he previously had (42:10)
  2. Job's relatives and friends return with sympathy, comfort, and gifts (42:11)
  3. List of Job's possessions (42:12)
  4. Job has ten more children (42:13)
  5. Names of the daughters (42:14)
  6. Job gives his daughter an inheritance (42:15)
- B. The Death of Job (42:16-17) – probably lived to be over 200 years old

## ***Psalms***

**Author:** Most people automatically think of \_\_\_\_\_ when they consider the question of who wrote the Book of Psalms. A shepherd boy who rose to become the most famous king of Judah, he was also known as "*the sweet psalmist of Israel*" (2 Samuel 23:1). He lived during the most creative age of Hebrew song and poetry. As king, he organized the services of worship in the tabernacle, appointing priests and Levites for the specific purpose of providing songs and music. So it is not surprising that his name should be clearly associated with this beautiful book of praise.

The brief descriptions that introduce the psalms have David listed as author in 73 instances. David's personality and identity are clearly stamped on many of these psalms. While it is clear that David wrote many of the individual psalms, he is definitely not the author of the entire collection. Two of the psalms (72) and (127) are attributed to Solomon, David's son and successor. Psalm 90 and 91 are prayers by Moses. Another group of 12 psalms (50) and (73—83) is ascribed to the family of Asaph. The sons of Korah wrote 11 psalms (42,44-49,84-85,87-88). Psalm 88 is attributed to Heman, while (89) is assigned to Ethan the Ezrahite. With the exception of Solomon and Moses, all these additional authors were priests or Levites who were responsible for providing music for sanctuary worship during David's reign. Fifty of the psalms designate no specific person as author.

**Date of Writing:** A careful examination of the authorship question, as well as the subject matter covered by the psalms themselves, reveal they span a period of many centuries. The oldest psalm in the collection is probably the prayers of Moses (90, 91), a reflection on the frailty of man as compared to the eternity of God. The latest psalm is probably (137), a song of lament clearly written during the days when the Hebrews were being held captive by the Babylonians, from about 586 to 538 B.C.

It is clear that the 150 individual psalms were written by many different people across a period of a thousand years in Israel's history. They must have been compiled and put together in their present form by some unknown editor shortly after the Captivity ended about 537 B.C.

**The Purpose of Writing:** With 150 individual psalms, the Book of Psalms is clearly the longest in the Bible. It is also one of the most diverse, since the psalms deal with such subjects as God and His creation, war, worship, wisdom, sin and evil, judgment, justice, and the coming of the Messiah.

These individual psalms were clearly inspired by God's Spirit. Through these hymns of praise, we come face to face with our Maker and Redeemer. In the glory of His presence, we are compelled to exclaim along with the psalmist, "O LORD our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth!" (Psalm 8:9). The Book contains much about sorrow, and joy – about Christ's first and second coming – about the Tribulation and the Millennium.

**Just a Few Key Verses:** Psalms 23:1; Psalms 51:10; Psalm 150:6

**Brief Summary:** The Book of Psalms is a collection of prayers, poems, and hymns that focus the worshiper's thoughts on God in praise and adoration. Parts of this Book were used as a hymnal in the worship services of ancient Israel. The musical heritage of the psalms is demonstrated by its title. It comes from a Greek word which means "a song sung to the accompaniment of a musical instrument." In the original Hebrew manuscripts, this long collection of 150 psalms was divided into five sections: Book 1 (1-41), Book 2 (42-72), Book 3 (73-89), Book 4 (90-106), and Book 5 (107-150). Each of these major sections closes with a brief prayer of praise.

**Practical Application:** The result of being filled with the Spirit or the word of Christ is singing Psalms! The psalms were the "songbook" of the early church. The hymns are the songs of the church that reflected the new truth in Christ.

We may think of the psalms as a description of our human response to God. At times God is presented in all His majesty and glory. Our response is wonder, awe, and fear (Psalm 68:32). But other psalms portray God as a loving Lord who is involved in our lives. Our response in these cases is to draw close to His comfort and security: "I will fear no evil; for thou art with me" (Psalm 23:4).

God is the same Lord in both these psalms. But we respond to Him in different ways, according to the specific needs of our lives. What a marvellous God we worship, the psalmist declares-- One who is

high and lifted up beyond our human experiences but also one who is close enough to touch and who walks beside us along life's way.

Other psalms might be described as outcries against God and the circumstances of life rather than responses to God because of His glory and His presence in our lives. The psalmist admits he sometimes feels abandoned by God as well as his human friends (Psalm 88). He agonizes over the lies directed against him by his false accusers (Psalm 109). He calls upon God to deliver him from his enemies and to wipe them out with His wrath (Psalm 59). Whatever else we may say about the psalms, we must admit they are realistic about human feelings and the way we sometimes respond to the problems and inequities of life.

We can bring all our feelings to God, no matter how negative or complaining they may be. And we can rest assured that He will hear and understand. The psalmist teaches us that the most profound prayer of all is a cry for help as we find ourselves overwhelmed by the problems of life.

## **Proverbs**

**Author:** King Solomon is the principal writer of Proverbs. His name appears in 1:1, 10:1, and 25:1. We may also presume Solomon collected and edited proverbs other than his own, for Ecclesiastes 12:9 says, "*And moreover, because the preacher was wise, he still taught the people knowledge; yea, he gave good heed, and sought out, and set in order many proverbs.*" The Hebrew title **Mishle Shelomoh** is translated "*Proverbs of Solomon.*" A proverb is a wise saying – something that has deep meaning and truths.

**Date of Writing:** Solomon's proverbs were penned around 950 B.C. During his reign as king, the nation of Israel reached its pinnacle spiritually, politically, culturally, and economically. As Israel's reputation soared, so did King Solomon's. Foreign dignitaries from the far reaches of the known world travelled great distances to hear the wise monarch speak (1 Kings 4:34).

**Purpose of Writing:** The purpose of the Book of Proverbs is revealed by its author in the opening verses of the first chapter (1:2-4):

- To know wisdom and instruction;
- To perceive the words of understanding;
- To receive the instruction of wisdom, justice, and judgment, and equity;
- To give subtilty (wiseness) to the simple,
- To [give] the young man knowledge and discretion.

Knowledge is nothing more than an accumulation of raw facts, but wisdom is the ability of seeing people, events, and situations as God sees them. In the Book of Proverbs, Solomon reveals the mind of God in matters high and lofty and in common, ordinary, everyday situations, too. It appears as if no topic escaped King Solomon's attention. Matters pertaining to personal conduct, sexual relations, business, wealth, charity, ambition, discipline, debt, child-rearing, character, alcohol, politics, revenge, and godliness are among the many topics covered in this rich collection of wise sayings.

**Key Verses:** Proverbs 1:5; Proverbs 1:7; Proverbs 3:5,6; Proverbs 4:5, 7; Proverbs 8;13,14

**Brief Summary:** Summarizing the Book of Proverbs is a bit difficult, for unlike many other books of Scripture, there is no particular plot or storyline found in its pages; likewise, there are no principal characters in the book. It is \_\_\_\_\_ that takes centre stage--a grand, divine wisdom that transcends the whole of history, peoples, and cultures. Even a perfunctory reading of this magnificent treasury reveals the concise sayings of the wise King Solomon are as relevant today as they were some three thousand years ago.

**Practical Application:** There is an undeniable practicality found in this book, for sound and sensible answers to all manner of complex difficulties are found within its thirty-one chapters. Certainly, Proverbs is the greatest "How to" book ever written and those who have the good sense to take Solomon's lessons to heart will quickly discover godliness, prosperity, and contentment are theirs for the asking.

### **Simple Outline of Proverbs**

I. **Introduction** (1:1-7)

II. **Parental Advice** (1:8-7:27)

- A. Invitation for Children to obey (1:8-9)
- B. Young people are to Avoid sinners (1:10-19)
- C. Wisdom's invitation to everyone (1:11-33)
- D. The Benefits of wisdom (2:1-3:2)
- E. More Advice (3:3-35)



1. Be faithful (3:3-4)
2. Trust in God (3:5-8)
3. Give (3:9-10)
4. Accept discipline (3:11-12)
5. Preciousness of wisdom (3:13-26)
6. Do good to others (3:27-35)

- F. Seek wisdom (4:1-27)  
G. Avoid folly (5:1-14)  
H. Be faithful to your wife (5:15-23)  
I. More general advice (6:1-35)

1. Do not become ensnared by neighbor (6:1-5)
2. Do not be lazy (6:6-11)
3. Be honest (6:12-15)
4. Seven things God hates (6:16-19)
5. Warnings (6:20-35)

- J. Requests to obey (7:1-5)  
K. The attraction of folly (7:6-23)  
L. Summons to obey (7:24-27)

### III. **The Way of Wisdom** (8:1-9:18)

- A. Hymn to wisdom (8:1-31)  
B. Summons to obey (8:32-36)  
C. Wisdom's invitation (9:1-12)  
D. Folly's invitation leads to death (9:13-18)

### IV. **Proverbs of Solomon** (10:1-24:34)

- A. Miscellaneous proverbs (10:1-22:16)  
B. Words of the wise (22:17-24:22)  
C. Sayings of the wise (24:23-34)

### V. **Additional Proverbs of Solomon Copied by Officials of King Hezekiah** (25:1-29:27)

- A. Introduction (25:1)  
B. Concerning kings (25:2-7a)  
C. Concerning legal disputes (25:7b-10)  
D. Miscellaneous proverbs (25:11-29:27)

### VI. **The Words of Agur** (30:1-33)

### VII. **The Words of King Lemuel** (31:1-9)

### VIII. **The Model Wife/Model Woman** (31:10-31)

## ***Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon***

### ***Ecclesiastes***

**Author:** The book of Ecclesiastes does not directly mention its author. But there are quite a few verses that imply that Solomon wrote this book.

**Date of Writing:** Solomon's reign as King of Israel lasted from around 970 B.C. to around 930 B.C. The Book of Ecclesiastes was likely written towards the end of his reign, approximately 935 B.C.

**Purpose of Writing:** Ecclesiastes is a book of perspective. The narrative of “the Preacher” (KJV) reveals the depression caused by seeking happiness in worldly things. This book gives Christians a chance to see the world through the eyes of a person who, though very wise, is trying to find meaning in temporary, human things. Most every form of worldly pleasure is explored by the Preacher, and none of it gives him a sense of meaning.

In the end, the Preacher comes to accept that faith in God is the only way to find personal meaning. He decides to accept the fact that life is brief and ultimately worthless without God. The Preacher advises the reader to focus on an eternal God instead of temporary pleasure.

**Key Verses:** Ecclesiastes 1:2; 1:18; 2:11; 12:1; 12:13

**Brief Summary:** Two phrases are repeated often in Ecclesiastes. The word translated as “vanity” in the KJV is used to emphasize the temporary nature of worldly things. In the end, even the most impressive human achievements will be left behind. The phrase “under the sun” occurs 28 times, and refers to the mortal world. When the Preacher refers to “all things under the sun”, he is talking about earthly, temporary, human things.

The first seven chapters of the book of Ecclesiastes describe all of the worldly things “under the sun” that the Preacher tries to find fulfillment in. He tries:

- scientific discovery (1:10-11)
- wisdom and philosophy (1:13-18)
- mirth (2:1)
- alcohol (2:3)
- architecture (2:4)
- property (2:7-8)
- and luxury (2:8).

The Preacher turned his mind towards different philosophies to find meaning, such as materialism (2:19-20), and even moral codes (including chapters 8-9). Everything humanly attempted was meaningless, a temporary diversion that, without God, had no purpose or longevity. Chapters 8-12 of Ecclesiastes describe the Preacher’s suggestions and comments on how a life should be lived. He comes to the conclusion that without God, there is no truth or meaning to life. He has seen many evils, and realized that even the best of man’s achievements are worth nothing in the long run. So, he advises the reader to acknowledge God from youth (12:1), and to follow His will (12:13-14).

**Practical Application:** Ecclesiastes offers the Christian an opportunity to understand the emptiness and despair that those who do not know God grapple with. Those who do not have a saving faith in Christ are faced with a life that will ultimately end and become irrelevant. If there is no salvation, and no God, then not only is there no point to life, but no purpose or direction to it either. The world “under the sun”, apart from God, is frustrating, cruel, unfair, brief, and “utterly meaningless.”

Ecclesiastes should be read carefully and in context. Many of the statements are very pessimistic, and seem at odds with other parts of the Bible. By reading the entire text, one can see that the Preacher is discussing the viewpoint of one without God. His pessimism and fatalism is from the perspective of

one with no hope, no meaning, and no God. The conclusions of Ecclesiastes demonstrate how nothing fills the natural hole in our lives like a relationship with the One who wants to join Him in a place beyond the world “under the sun.”

### Simple outline of the Book of Ecclesiastes

1. **Vanity of Wisdom** (Ch. 1)
2. **Vanity of Pleasures** (Ch. 2)
3. **A Time for Everything** (Ch. 3)
4. **Vanity of Advancement** (Ch. 4)
5. **Vanity of Riches** (Ch. 5-6)
6. **Blessings of Wisdom** (Ch. 7)
7. **Obey Authority** (Ch. 8)
8. **A Common End** (Ch. 9)
9. **Choose Wisdom and not Folly** (Ch. 10)
10. **Diligence in Youth** (Ch. 11)
11. **The Fear of God** (Ch. 12)

### Extended Outline

#### I. Introduction (1:1)

#### II. The Vanity of Life (1:2-2:26)

- A. "All is vanity" (1:2-3)
- B. There is nothing new (1:4-11)
- C. Quest for something lasting (1:12-2:26)
  1. Wisdom (1:12-18)
  2. Pleasure (2:1-2)
  3. Wine (2:3)
  4. Building (2:4-6)
  5. Wealth (2:7-8)
  6. Nothing lasts (2:9-26)

#### III. Teachings about the Emptiness of Life (3:1-12:8)

- A. Mystery of time (3:1-15)
  1. Song concerning appropriate times (3:1-8)
  2. God's ways are unfathomable (3:9-15)
- B. Vanity of life (3:16-4:3)
- C. Vanity of competitive work (4:4-6)
- D. Value of having a companion (4:7-12)
- E. Vanity of trying to please people (4:13-16)
- F. Necessity to obey God (5:1-9)
- G. Vanity of wealth (5:10-6:9)
- H. Vanity of life (6:10-12)
- I. Miscellaneous proverbs (7:1-14)
- J. Vanity of being overly righteous or seeking power (7:15-22)
- K. Vanity of expecting to discover all answers (7:23-29)
- L. Value of wisdom (8:1)
- M. Proper behavior toward king (8:2-9)
- N. Unfathomable mystery of God's activity (8:10-17)
- O. Enjoy life before finality of death (9:1-10)
- P. Mystery of life (9:11-12)

- Q. Value of wisdom (19:13-18)
- R. Miscellaneous proverbs (10:1-20)
- S. Value of Risk (11:1-6)
- T. Life (11:7-12:8)
  - 1. Value of life (11:7-8)
  - 2. Enjoy youth (11:9-10)
  - 3. Description of old age or decaying town (12:1-7)
  - 4. "All is vanity" (12:8)

**IV. Final Conclusions (12:9-14)**

- A. Solomon's final work (12:9-10)
- B. The Value of proverbs (12:11)
- C. Vanity of excessive study (12:12)
- D. Obedience is everything (12:13-14)

## ***Song of Solomon***

**Author:** \_\_\_\_\_ wrote Song of Solomon, according to the first verse. This song is one of 1,005 that Solomon wrote (1 Kings 4:32). The title “Song of Songs” is a superlative, meaning this is the best one.

**Date of Writing:** Solomon wrote this song during the early part of his reign, mostly likely. This would place the date of composition close to 965 B.C.

**Purpose of Writing:** The Song of Solomon is a lyric poem meant to praise the virtues of love between a husband and his wife. The poem clearly presents marriage as God’s design. A man and woman are to live together within the context of marriage, loving each other spiritually, emotionally, and physically. This book combats two extremes: asceticism (the denial of all pleasure) and hedonism (the pursuit of only pleasure). The marriage profiled in The Song of Solomon is a model of care, commitment, and delight.

**Key Verses:** Song of Solomon 2:7; 3:5; 8:4; 8:6-7.

**Brief Summary:** The poetry takes the form of a dialogue between a \_\_\_\_\_ (king Solomon) and his wife (the \_\_\_\_\_). We can divide the book into three sections:

1. The courtship (1:1 - 3:5);
2. The wedding (3:6 - 5:1);
3. The maturing marriage (5:2 - 8:14).

The song begins before the wedding, as the bride-to-be longs to be with her betrothed, and she looks forward to his intimate caresses. However, she advises letting love develop naturally, in its own time. The king praises the Shulamite’s beauty, overcoming her feelings of insecurity about her appearance. The Shulamite has a dream in which she loses Solomon and searches throughout the city for him. With the help of the city guards, she finds her beloved and clings to him, taking him to a safe place. Upon waking, she repeats her injunction not to force love.

On the wedding night, the husband again praises the beauty of his wife, and in highly symbolic language, the wife invites her spouse to partake of all she has to offer. They make love, and God blesses their union.

As the marriage matures, the husband and wife go through a difficult time, symbolized in another dream. In this second dream, the Shulamite rebuffs her husband, and he leaves. Overcome with guilt, she searches the city for him; but this time, instead of helping her, the guards beat her—maybe symbolic of her pained conscience. Things end happily as the lovers reunite and are reconciled.

As the song ends, both the husband and wife are confident and secure in their love, they sing of the lasting nature of true love, and they yearn to be in each other’s presence.

**Practical Application:** Our world is confused about marriage. The prevalence of divorce and modern attempts to redefine marriage stand in glaring contrast to Solomon’s Song. Marriage, says the biblical poet, is to be celebrated, enjoyed, and revered. This book provides some practical guidelines for strengthening our marriages:

1. Give your spouse the attention he or she needs. Take the time to truly know your spouse.
2. Encouragement and praise, not criticism, is vital to a successful relationship.
3. Enjoy each other. Plan some getaways. Be creative, even playful, with each other. Delight in God’s gift of married love.
4. Do whatever is necessary to reassure your commitment to your spouse. Renew your vows; work through problems and do not consider divorce as a solution. God intends for you both to live in a deeply peaceful, secure love.

**Brief Outline**

1. Love's Devotion (Ch. 1)
2. Love's Fellowship (Ch. 2)
3. Love's Friendship (Ch. 3)
4. Love's Beauty (Ch. 4)
5. Love's Communion (Ch. 5)
6. Love's Companionship (Ch. 6)
7. Love's Completeness (Ch. 7)
8. Love's Maturity (Ch. 8)

**Extended Outline****I. Superscription (1:1)****II. The Power of Love (1:2-8:4)**

- A. The quality and depth of love (1:2-4)
- B. The lovers talk (1:5-2:7)
- C. The expectant desire for the lovers (2:8-17)
- D. The lost and found lover (3:1-5)
- E. King Solomon's procession (3:6-11)
- F. The woman's beauty (4:1-8)
- G. The lovers talk (4:9-5:1)
- H. The woman describes her lover to other women (5:2-6:3)
- I. The woman's beauty (6:4-10)
- J. The desire for love (6:11-13)
- K. The woman's beauty (7:1-9)
- L. Lovers united (7:10-8:4)

**III. Concluding Comments (8:5-13)**

- A. The lovers approach from the desert (8:5)
- B. Inseparable, undying love (8:6-7)
- C. The brothers versus their sister (8:8-10)
- D. The man prizes his beloved (8:11-12)
- E. The lovers talk (8:13-14)