

Episode: Kings and Prophets Series No. 9

Narrator: Son of Korah

Primary Scriptures: *Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs*

Story Summary: Brief description of the *Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Song of Songs* **Location:** Kingdom of Israel

Time: Circa 1050-930 BC

Suggested Memory Scriptures: Proverbs 1:7; 3:5-7, 13-14, 27-28; 4:23; 6:10-11; 8:11; 10:2. Ecclesiastes 1:2-3, 10-11; 2:24-25; 3:1, 12-13, 22; 4:12; 5:10; 9:11; 11:2; 12:1, 13-14

Many people attribute *Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs*, and most of *Proverbs* to King Solomon. Possibly this stems from 1 Kings 4:32, which says about King Solomon, “He spoke three thousand parables and his songs numbered a thousand and five.” He was known world-wide for his far-reaching knowledge and wisdom.

Proverbs 1 and 10 begin by specifying they are the proverbs of Solomon. Proverbs 22:17 says they are thirty sayings of the wise, and then other attributions begin being given, including to Solomon.

There are many themes that run through Proverbs, including: the importance of wisdom, the folly of adultery and prostitution, and the value of family relationships. Since Solomon likely violated many of his proverbs in his later life, it would be incredibly interesting to know at which point in his life each proverb was written. As Solomon points out, following the proverbs is the wise thing to do. They are not commandments from God, but rather are wise pieces of guidance from a multitude of wise people.

Ecclesiastes is commonly attributed to Solomon, although the text itself says it is written by the Teacher. The main message is that all of life is meaningless or insubstantial because death takes everybody to the same zero level. Most of the book is narrated by a third person who is talking about the Teacher. Toward the end, the voice changes to that of the Teacher, so it leads you to believe the Teacher was narrating his own life, making sense of the thought that Solomon wrote it.

The narrator indicates he is talking about a king who has experienced everything, so he knows what he is talking about. Except for the last verse, the book has little to do with God, and is rather sad. Many people believe the last two verses were added at a later date than the rest of the book.

Song of Songs, or *Solomon’s Song of Songs*, is a love poem voiced through three parties: he, she, and friends. “He” is often identified as a royal prince, possibly Solomon. “She” is his lover and fiancé. Many people read this writing as an allegory of God and the Israelites, or Jesus and his church.

Discussion Questions:

1. What are proverbs, and what are they good for? Are proverbs commandments that must be followed?
2. What does Proverbs 4:23 mean? How can you follow it?
3. Do you think Ecclesiastes should be considered as wisdom saying to be observed, or the observations of an older man about how he sees life?
4. What does Proverbs 6:16-19 mean? Are those still true today, or do you think there are other things that have taken their place?
5. What does Ecclesiastes 3:1-8 mean to you?
6. Is Ecclesiastes 3:22 true for you?
7. Does Ecclesiastes 7:15 go against Christian principles, or does it fit them?
8. Why do you think Song of Songs is in the Bible?

1. Proverbs 1:1-6 explains that proverbs are sayings and riddles of the wise. They are good for gaining wisdom, instruction, understanding, and prudence. Proverbs are not commandments that must be followed.

Application Questions:

1. According to Proverbs 2:5-6, what does wisdom consist of, and who gives wisdom? Do you seek wisdom from God or from other sources? Are you typically seeking wisdom, knowledge or entertainment? According to Proverbs 4:7, how valuable is wisdom? Compare these to Proverbs 9:10.
2. How can you enact Proverbs 3:27-28 in your life?
3. What does Proverbs 6:1 mean? Have you ever guaranteed someone else's loan or business deal? Would you do it again?
4. Is Ecclesiastes 1:2 meant to be a true statement, or a declaration that sets up the discussions in the rest of the book?

Application Questions for Teens:

1. According to Proverbs 3:5-7, should you trust in your own understanding or in the ways of God? If you are attracted to evil things or ways, what should you do?
2. According to Proverbs 3:11-12, does a wise parent discipline a child or let it do what it wants? Are there ways this proverb could be misinterpreted?
3. Would you rather have lots of money, be popular at school, or have wisdom?
4. What does Proverbs 4:24 mean?
5. Do you think Ecclesiastes 5:10 is true? If so, why do many people envy rich people so much?