

C. When reading Proverbs, watch for key words such as knowledge, wisdom, learning, fool, etc. Keep an eye out for contrasts as may be seen with phrases such as:

wise and foolish

wicked and righteous

rich and poor

obedient child, disobedient child, etc.

Remember that the aphorisms (maxims, etc) are general principles and not specific promises (15:1, for instance). The parallelism of the psalms will also be seen in Proverbs. If you have a center column reference Bible you will be able to see a great many citations from Proverbs in the New Testament.

## **VI. Looking at Prophecy**

A. Prophecy is the institution of declaring truth or the will of God or simply speaking on God's behalf in a revelatory manner. (These definitions tire me!) A number of factors are important in the study of prophecy.

1. Locate the text and separate the prophetic message from non-related portions.
2. Distinguish prediction from prescription
3. Determine local and universal elements
4. Observe conditional elements....some are expressed, some implied. (Jonah, for example...predicts Ninevah will be destroyed in 40 days...he says nothing about repentance, but when repentance occurs, the destruction is avoided.)
5. Study perspective....when are the events described to take place? Are they in a chronological order? A practical order? A wait and see order?
6. Is there a prophetic sign? The sign is usually a short term indication that shows the correctness of the major prophesy. (1 Kings 13----the ruined altar is the sign, the prophesy is about something that will happen nearly 400 years later.)
7. Distinguish between true and false prophets. Deuteronomy 13 and 18.

The great bulk of the prophetic literature is prescriptive...telling God's people (and sometimes others) what to do. The predictive affairs are to indicate the truthfulness of the prophet as well as to provide a guide for further action. Prophecy is to draw us to do the will of God...not to allow us to draw a calendar of events.