

- the logic of Job's friends
- the concepts of immortality
- the resolution of the Joban problem
- teachings of nature
- the character and advice of Elihu

There are many books and commentaries on Job (as noted) but please note that in my judgment the book does not answer the "Why do the righteous suffer" question but rather deals with the integrity and character of God. If the class is blessed with providential oversight I will probably not bring out my Job sermon notes to indicate how I think the book should be treated. The material in the POETS course (the Job section) is particularly valuable and at present is given by Mr. Harding.

3. A Survey Study of Proverbs ("God's Wisdom")

a, An Overview

Proverbs is an anthology, or collection, of several sets of proverbs which were written by known persons (Solomon) and unknown ("the wise," Agur, Lemuel). The Book's title says the proverbs are Solomon's and rabbinic tradition, based on Proverbs 25:1, surmised that King Hezekiah and his men were the final redactors.

Until recently, critical scholarship divided Proverbs into early (Prov. 10:1-22:16) and late (1:8-8:18) sources. These were identified by language, imagery, organization, and sophistication of thought (see the "Archaeology section that follows). Today the general mood of Old Testament scholarship is more conservative with regard to the Solomonic authorship--the growing consensus is that Solomon was involved personally in the collection and authorship of much of the book.

Solomon was probably not the author of all the proverbs in the sense of their original composer, but was their compiler and editor. Some proverbs bear striking resemblance to proverbs from other civilizations, notably Egypt and Mesopotamia. This may be in part because the human situation is much the same worldwide; it may also reflect an international body of wisdom literature from which Solomon and members of his court drew during the high point of the Hebrew monarch. The collections subtitled "Sayings of the Wise" (22:17-24:34) may also have been compiled by Solomon, but, having fewer of his own contributions were not called by his name. The two short collections at the end of Proverbs, by Agur and the mother of Lemuel (Prov. 30-31), were probably added at the time of the final editing of the book or perhaps by the men of Hezekiah when they added the second group of Solomon's proverbs.

Proverbs, as has been implied, was probably compiled in sections. Initially, under Solomon and his influence on the growth of Israelite wisdom literature, 1:1-22:16 was combined into a single work. The "Sayings of the Wise" (22:17-24:34) may have been added at this time or shortly thereafter. The second section of Solomon's proverbs was (discovered?) edited and added by the men of Hezekiah more than two centuries later.

All of the Proverbs were written as poetry. For more discussion of this style see the notes on Psalms, page 78 ff. You might consult as well a Bible Dictionary or encyclopaedia on "Hebrew Poetry."