

PROVERBS:  
DAILY WISDOM



*The*  
HOLY BIBLE

ENGLISH STANDARD VERSION

*Containing the Book of Proverbs*



CROSSWAY

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ESV® Proverbs: Daily Wisdom

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## INTRODUCTION

The message of the Bible is God's wisdom for sinful fools. From the first sin of Adam and Eve right up to the present time and on through history until the second coming of Christ, fallen humans foolishly choose their own way rather than gladly yielding to the wise ways of God in accord with how he has made the world to run. Mercifully, however, Jesus Christ "became to us wisdom from God" (1 Cor. 1:30). By faith alone his perfectly wise life becomes ours by sheer grace. Yet the question remains: as we move through this world as forgiven yet still inclined toward foolishness, how do we grow in wisdom?

The book of Proverbs exists to meet us at this point of need. Here wisdom comes to us in concentrated form. This tightly packed book is a treasure trove of help and counsel for any who will open up to it. Unfortunately, however, this book of the Bible is easily neglected. In many Bible reading plans, Proverbs is approached like other books of the Bible, with a whole chapter or two expected to be read in a single sitting. This way of reading Proverbs certainly has its benefits. But the proverbs are meant not to be quickly downloaded but to be slowly chewed on, meditated over, and considered in an unhurried way, one at a time.

## Introduction

For this reason we have created *ESV Proverbs: Daily Wisdom*, which provides brief portions of this book for independent readings. This edition is designed to take the reader through this book of the Bible in one year, as there are 365 readings; however, the readings are not given dates, so that the proverbs can be engaged however the reader wishes. If one desires to read the Proverbs according to date over the course of one year, a reading plan has been provided accordingly in the back of this book (pp. 210–213). In either case, *Daily Wisdom* is designed to supplement regular Bible reading. This brief, meditative time in Proverbs can be added meaningfully to fill out broader reading of Scripture. In this way we can continue to live in all the Bible while also growing, bit by bit and day by day, in divine wisdom.

It is our pleasure to offer to the church *ESV Proverbs: Daily Wisdom*, trusting that the Lord will draw you more deeply into the path of wisdom as you walk with him through the pages of Proverbs.

## P R E F A C E

### THE BIBLE

The words of the Bible are the very words of God our Creator speaking to us. They are completely truthful;<sup>1</sup> they are pure;<sup>2</sup> they are powerful;<sup>3</sup> and they are wise and righteous.<sup>4</sup> We should read these words with reverence and awe,<sup>5</sup> and with joy and delight.<sup>6</sup> Through these words God gives us eternal life,<sup>7</sup> and daily nourishes our spiritual lives.<sup>8</sup>

### THE ESV TRANSLATION

The English Standard Version® (ESV®) stands in the classic stream of English Bible translations that goes back nearly five centuries. In this stream, accurate faithfulness to the original text is combined with simplicity, beauty, and dignity of expression. Our goal has been to carry forward this legacy for this generation and generations to come.

The ESV is an “essentially literal” translation that seeks as far as possible to reproduce the meaning and structure of the original text and the personal style of each Bible writer. We have sought to be “as literal as possible” while maintaining

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<sup>1</sup>Ps. 119:160; Prov. 30:5; Titus 1:2; Heb. 6:18 <sup>2</sup>Ps. 12:6 <sup>3</sup>Jer. 23:29; Heb. 4:12; 1 Pet. 1:23 <sup>4</sup>Ps. 19:7–11 <sup>5</sup>Deut. 28:58; Ps. 119:74; Isa. 66:2 <sup>6</sup>Ps. 19:7–11; 119:14, 97, 103; Jer. 15:16 <sup>7</sup>John 6:68; 1 Pet. 1:23 <sup>8</sup>Deut. 32:46; Matt. 4:4

## Preface

clear expression and literary excellence. Therefore the ESV is well suited for both personal reading and church ministry, for devotional reflection and serious study, and for Scripture memorization.

### THE ESV PUBLISHING TEAM

The ESV publishing team has included more than a hundred people. The fourteen-member Translation Oversight Committee benefited from the work of fifty biblical experts serving as Translation Review Scholars and from the comments of the more than fifty members of the Advisory Council. This international team from many denominations shares a common commitment to the truth of God's Word and to historic Christian orthodoxy.

### TO GOD'S HONOR AND PRAISE

We know that no Bible translation is perfect; but we also know that God uses imperfect and inadequate things to his honor and praise. So to God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—and to his people—we offer what we have done, with our prayers that it may prove useful, with gratitude for much help given, and with ongoing wonder that our God should ever have entrusted to us so momentous a task.

To God alone be the glory!  
The Translation Oversight Committee



# PROVERBS



*Proverbs 1:1-7*

The proverbs of Solomon, son of David, king of Israel:

To know wisdom and instruction,  
to understand words of insight,  
to receive instruction in wise dealing,  
in righteousness, justice, and equity;  
to give prudence to the simple,  
knowledge and discretion to the youth—  
Let the wise hear and increase in learning,  
and the one who understands obtain guidance,  
to understand a proverb and a saying,  
the words of the wise and their riddles.

The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge;  
fools despise wisdom and instruction.

*Proverbs 1:8–19*

Hear, my son, your father's instruction,  
and forsake not your mother's teaching,  
for they are a graceful garland for your head  
and pendants for your neck.

My son, if sinners entice you,  
do not consent.

If they say, "Come with us, let us lie in wait for blood;  
let us ambush the innocent without reason;  
like Sheol let us swallow them alive,  
and whole, like those who go down to the pit;  
we shall find all precious goods,  
we shall fill our houses with plunder;  
throw in your lot among us;  
we will all have one purse"—

my son, do not walk in the way with them;  
hold back your foot from their paths,  
for their feet run to evil,  
and they make haste to shed blood.

For in vain is a net spread  
in the sight of any bird,

but these men lie in wait for their own blood;  
they set an ambush for their own lives.  
Such are the ways of everyone who is greedy for unjust  
gain;  
it takes away the life of its possessors.

*Proverbs 1:20–23*

Wisdom cries aloud in the street,  
in the markets she raises her voice;  
at the head of the noisy streets she cries out;  
at the entrance of the city gates she speaks:  
“How long, O simple ones, will you love being simple?  
How long will scoffers delight in their scoffing  
and fools hate knowledge?  
If you turn at my reproof,  
behold, I will pour out my spirit to you;  
I will make my words known to you.

*Proverbs 1:24–33*

“Because I have called and you refused to listen,  
    have stretched out my hand and no one has  
        heeded,  
because you have ignored all my counsel  
    and would have none of my reproof,  
I also will laugh at your calamity;  
    I will mock when terror strikes you,  
when terror strikes you like a storm  
    and your calamity comes like a whirlwind,  
    when distress and anguish come upon you.  
Then they will call upon me, but I will not answer;  
    they will seek me diligently but will not find me.  
Because they hated knowledge  
    and did not choose the fear of the LORD,  
would have none of my counsel  
    and despised all my reproof,  
therefore they shall eat the fruit of their way,  
    and have their fill of their own devices.  
For the simple are killed by their turning away,  
    and the complacency of fools destroys them;

but whoever listens to me will dwell secure  
and will be at ease, without dread of disaster.”

*Proverbs 2:1–15*

My son, if you receive my words  
and treasure up my commandments with you,  
making your ear attentive to wisdom  
and inclining your heart to understanding;  
yes, if you call out for insight  
and raise your voice for understanding,  
if you seek it like silver  
and search for it as for hidden treasures,  
then you will understand the fear of the LORD  
and find the knowledge of God.  
For the LORD gives wisdom;  
from his mouth come knowledge and  
understanding;  
he stores up sound wisdom for the upright;  
he is a shield to those who walk in integrity,

guarding the paths of justice  
and watching over the way of his saints.  
Then you will understand righteousness and justice  
and equity, every good path;  
for wisdom will come into your heart,  
and knowledge will be pleasant to your soul;  
discretion will watch over you,  
understanding will guard you,  
delivering you from the way of evil,  
from men of perverted speech,  
who forsake the paths of uprightness  
to walk in the ways of darkness,  
who rejoice in doing evil  
and delight in the perverseness of evil,  
men whose paths are crooked,  
and who are devious in their ways.

*Proverbs 2:16–22*

So you will be delivered from the forbidden woman,  
from the adulteress with her smooth words,



who forsakes the companion of her youth  
and forgets the covenant of her God;  
for her house sinks down to death,  
and her paths to the departed;  
none who go to her come back,  
nor do they regain the paths of life.

So you will walk in the way of the good  
and keep to the paths of the righteous.  
For the upright will inhabit the land,  
and those with integrity will remain in it,  
but the wicked will be cut off from the land,  
and the treacherous will be rooted out of it.

### *Proverbs 3:1–12*

My son, do not forget my teaching,  
but let your heart keep my commandments,  
for length of days and years of life  
and peace they will add to you.

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28	27:14 . . . . .	28	29:21-22 . . . .	28	31:24-25 . . . .
29	27:15-16 . . . .	29	29:23-24 . . . .	29	31:26-27 . . . .
30	27:17-18 . . . .	30	29:25-26 . . . .	30	31:28-29 . . . .
31	27:19-20 . . . .			31	31:30-31 . . . .