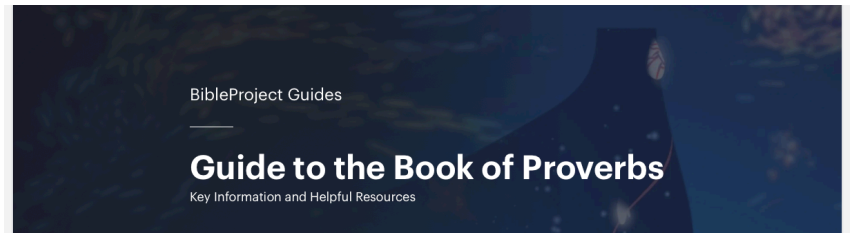


WEEK 3

D i g g i n g

BibleProject Guides: Guide to the Book of Proverbs

www.bibleproject.com/guides/book-of-proverbs



The Bible Project App and website has a TON of resources for the serious Bible Nerd. One resource they have is guides for books of the Bible. Proverbs is a book packed full of wisdom. Check out the guide/videos on the website QR to the right.

The word “proverb” typically refers to a short, clever saying that offers wisdom in some way. While this book does contain many hundreds of proverbs, most of them are found in the center section of the book (chs. 10-29). In the outer frames of the book (chs. 1-9 and 30-31) are more elaborate poems all about wisdom. There is more to this book than you might think.



Fear of the Lord

www.practicaltheologytoday.com

The concept of fearing God is among the most challenging biblical ideas, particularly in the context of the Old Testament, the Hebrew scriptures. We are likely familiar with, The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom... (Proverbs 9:10a). It's one of those Proverbs that sounds profound and correct but we don't know why. If asked to describe or explain “fear of the Lord,” we might be a bit at a loss. What does it really mean?

Yirah (יִרְאָה) is the most common Hebrew word used for “fear” in the context of fearing God. It conveys a sense of awe, reverence, and respect. Yirah is often associated with a profound recognition of God's greatness and holiness, leading to an attitude of humility and obedience. It is frequently used in the context of seeking wisdom and understanding from God (thus the Proverbs 9:10 passage).

The fear of Yahweh represents an attitude of recognizing our complete reliance on Him for mercy, forgiveness, and even our very existence. Fearing God is having a clear understanding of who God is and how my own sinful nature places me in conflict with his nature, and it is knowing that my only hope is divine grace and mercy. A healthy understanding of “fear of the Lord” is dependent on my view of God. If I know the God of scripture, “fear of the Lord” will look different than if I view Him as a god that smites, a celestial tyrant.

N.T. Wright says, “Human beings were made to know, worship, love and serve the creator God. That always was and always will be the way to healthy and fruitful human living. It demands, of course, a certain kind of humility: a willingness to let God be God, to celebrate and honour him as such, and acknowledge his power in and over the world.”

The placing of our lives in the hands of God is the attitude of submission that the Old Testament refers to as “the fear of the Lord.” Bottom line...

Questions To Ask When

Sometimes when we read a passage in the Bible it can be confusing or we may not know how to best figure out what it is saying. Below are some good questions to ask when reading the Bible to help make the Bible make sense.

1. What stands out to me?

Note that this does not say “What does this passage mean?” Consider what stood out to you? What did you notice? What did the Holy Spirit highlight for you as you read it?

2. What does the text say about the character/nature of God?

The Scriptures are primarily about God so ask first what the text says about Him before moving to what it says about us, about His plan, or about anything else.

3. What does the text say?

Look at what the text literally says first (this may not be the intent of the text but it is important to look at it as read... at least initially).

4. How is it saying it?

What is the genre of the text and how should we read text in that genre?

5. Why does it say it that way?

Speculate about why the author chose this method of saying what they've said.

6. What is it trying to say?

Getting behind the Scripture, looking at its context, its original audience, its author, etc., what is the text trying to get across to the reader (both the original audience and us today?)

7. How does this fit into the whole of the book and the whole of Scripture?

Looking at the whole book, does what is being said jive with the whole book, with the whole of Scripture?

8. What questions do I have?

Do you have questions about the text? If they aren't answered in the text, are they good questions or are we asking questions that the text isn't meant to answer?

9. How do I feel about this teaching/text? Why do I feel that way?

What does your gut say? Are you frustrated with it? Are you trying to make it say something else than what it says? Does it make you uncomfortable? Where are these feelings coming from? Is there sin in my life I need to repent of?

10. What is the universal application of this text/teaching?

What are we to do with this text? Consider the original audience as well as us today.

11. What is my personal application?

What is God calling you to apply with what you've learned with this text?

12. How will I apply what it calls me to?

Make a plan to apply what God has taught you. Seek to be faithful and obedient to His leading, wherever it may go.