

# **Dr. August Konkell, Proverbs, Session 11, Proverbs of Solomon Proverbs 10:1-22:16 6-min. Video Overview**

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Most of us, when we think of the book of Proverbs, we picture, you know, a big collection of wise sayings. Kind of random, but good advice. But what if I told you it's not random at all? What if it's actually a meticulously designed work of art, with a secret code hiding in plain sight? Well, today, we're going to start cracking it.

So let's start with one you've probably heard, or at least something like it. Proverbs 10, verse 1. On the surface, yeah, it's a pretty simple truth about family. Wise kids, happy parents.

Foolish kids, sad parents. Seems pretty straightforward, right? But what if this isn't just a piece of standalone advice? What if its very structure is the first clue, the first breadcrumb on a trail that leads to a much, much bigger design? This is where things start to get really interesting. Okay, so the first key to cracking this code isn't just what the Proverbs say; it's how they say it.

See, these aren't just sentences; they're tiny little poems, and they follow a really specific formula. Take a look. You can see how the proverb splits perfectly into two balanced lines.

Line A gives you one idea: a wise son and a happy father. Then line B comes in with the complete opposite: a foolish son and a sad mother. They're like two sides of the very same coin, working together.

And there's a name for this trick. It's called antithetical parallelism. That sounds fancy, but it's really the engine driving this whole first section of Proverbs.

You take two opposite ideas, you put them side by side, and bam, it drives home one single powerful point. And once you see this pattern, you start seeing it everywhere in the book. Alright, so we've got the poetic structure.

That's layer one. But there's another layer to this code. See, Proverbs hardly ever work as literal step-by-step instructions.

They almost always operate through metaphors, through comparison. And to really get them, you have to figure out what the intended comparison is. Let's use an example from our world to see how this works.

Think about the phrase, the ship plows through the water. We all get what that means, right? But how exactly is a ship like a plow? The answer might not be what you first think. This really nails the point.

So one person might look at the wake behind the boat and think, oh yeah, that looks like a furrow a plow leaves in a field. And that's a perfectly good comparison. It makes sense.

But an engineer would look at the bow, the front of the ship, and see how it's designed to cut through the water, just like a plow's sharp blade cuts through the dirt. Both analogies kind of work, but one of them is almost certainly the intended engineering metaphor. And that's the key right there.

When we read a proverb, our job is to be a bit of a detective. We have to figure out the original point of comparison the author was trying to make. It's not about what could be true.

It's about finding the specific lesson hidden inside that specific analogy. Now, because proverbs are such powerful little tools for communication, they can be used for more than just sharing wisdom. Like any tool, really, they can be used to build people up, or they can be used to cause some serious harm.

And the book of Proverbs knows this about itself. I mean, listen to this one. It paints such a vivid picture, doesn't it? A thorn bush is already dangerous, but you put it in the hands of someone who's drunk and reckless.

Yeah, somebody's going to get hurt. And it's saying the same thing is true for a proverb in the mouth of a fool. It can be wielded like a weapon, not a tool for helping.

History gives us a perfect real-world example of this. This phrase from the book of Samuel started out as a genuine, honest question. But over time, it totally morphed into this cutting, sarcastic sneer.

People would use it to mock someone who was acting way out of character, basically calling them a fraud. It just goes to show how a simple saying can become a powerful and pretty nasty weapon. Okay, so we've looked at the poetic form and the metaphorical meaning.

But now, now we get to the most stunning piece of evidence for the deliberate design in Proverbs. This is a kind of author's signature, hidden in plain sight in the actual number of verses. 375.

Just look at that number. It seems totally random, right? But believe me, it is the key to this whole thing. Because as it turns out, that first major collection in the book, the one explicitly titled The Proverbs of Solomon, contains precisely 375 proverbs, not 374, not 376, exactly 375.

And that, my friends, is absolutely not an accident. So what's so special about 375? Well, in ancient Hebrew, letters also doubled as numbers. It's a system called gematria.

And if you take the Hebrew letters for the name Solomon, which is shlomo, and you add up their numerical values, well, look what happens. Shin is 300. Lamed is 30.

Mem is 40. He is 5. And what do you get when you add it all up? 375. I mean, come on, that is absolutely mind-blowing.

The number of proverbs in the collection literally spells out the author's name. This isn't just a coincidence. It's a deliberate signature.

It's a stamp of authorship woven right into the fabric of the text itself, proving this collection was put together with incredible care. So after all that, we can't really look at proverbs as just a simple list of sayings anymore, can we? We now have a brand new toolkit to read it with fresh eyes, to see all the artistry that's going on just beneath the surface. So here it is, your new code-breaking toolkit.

Number one, see the structure. Look for that two-line poetic contrast. Number two, find the metaphor.

Hunt for the intended analogy. And number three, appreciate the design. Recognize the incredible artistry at play, right down to the author's hidden signature.

The Book of Proverbs isn't just a book of wisdom. It's an absolute masterpiece of literary design. And I guess the real question that leaves us is: now that we can see this pattern, now that we've cracked a part of the code, what else have we been missing? What other treasures are just waiting for us, hiding there in plain sight?