

GOD in the Book of Proverbs

God is mentioned less frequently in Proverbs than in most other Old Testament books. So, when the Lord IS mentioned in the book, it can be highly significant.

 the Lord	 the fear of the Lord	 Maker	 pronouns referring to God
 God	 the Lord AND God	 Other	? uncertain references to God

Ch.	5					10					15				
1	7	29													
2	5	6	7	8	17										
3	4	5	6	7	9	11	12	19	20	26	32	33	34		
4	x	putting wisdom first													
5	21														
6	16														
7	x	an adulterous woman ignores God													
8	13	22	26	27	28	29	30	31	35						
9	10														
10	3	22	27	29											
11	1	20													
12	2	22													
13	x	contrasting good and bad people													
14	2	26	27	31											
15	3	8	9	11	16	25	26	29	33						
16	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	9	11	20	33				
17	3	5	15												
18	10	22													
19	3	14	17	21	23										
20	1	12	22	23	24										
21	1	2	3	12 ?	30	31									
22	2	4	12	14	19	23									
23	17														
24	12	18	21												
25	2	22													
26	10 ?	against evil speaking													
27	x														
28	5	14 ?	25												
29	13	25	26												
30	1 ?	3	4	5	6	7	9								
31	30														
Ch.	5					10					15				

Proverbs begins with the fear of the Lord in 1:7 and ends with it in 31:30.

God is mentioned more in chapter three (13 times) than in any other chapter.

Why is God rarely mentioned? Perhaps it is because of the emphasis in Proverbs on gaining wisdom by listening to others (1:5, 4:1-23, 12:15, 13:10) and observing (7:6-27, 30:24-31). Even so, there are passages in Proverbs in which God is often mentioned (2:4-8, 3:4-12, 8:22-31, 14:26-31, 15:25-29, 16:1-11, 30:1-9).

Caution: In Japanese translations "God" and "the Lord" appear more often than in Hebrew and English because pronouns are often so translated. (See 8:26-31.) Moreover, the Japanese New Interconfessional Translation loosely translates "the wicked" as "one who opposes God" and "the righteous" as "one who obeys God." (See 10:16 and 13:9.) "God" is not directly mentioned in these verses or others like them.

By far the most common term for God used in Proverbs and the rest of the Old Testament is "the Lord" which means "He who is." The verses with this term are marked in light or dark blue.

"The fear of the Lord" is mentioned often and is associated with humility (15:33, 22:4) and forsaking sin (3:7, 8:13, 16:6, 24:21). These verses are marked in dark blue. (Also see 28:14.)

"The fear of the Lord" is mentioned more in Proverbs than in any other book. (Cf. Deut. 6:1-25, Job 28:28, Psa. 34:7-17, Eccl. 8:12, 12:23, Jon. 1:9-16, Mal. 3:16, Acts 9:31, Col. 3:22, and 1 Pet. 2:17.)

The common terms translated "God" are probably only used six times in Proverbs (2:5, 2:17, 3:4, 25:2, 30:5 and 30:9). Twice this is with "the Lord" (2:5, 30:9). (Opinions vary on 26:10 and 30:1.)

God is referred to as **Maker** in 14:31, 17:5, and 22:2. In addition, the Lord's work in creation is mentioned with different terms in 3:19-20, 8:22-31, 16:4, 20:12, 29:13, and 30:4.

We should trust in the Lord (28:25) rather than in our own hearts (28:26). (Cf. 29:25.)

Agur, the author of Proverbs 30:1-33, was a humble Gentile who began with God.

In a few verses, it is unclear if there is a reference to God or not. Translations vary on this in 21:12, 26:10, 28:14, and 30:1.