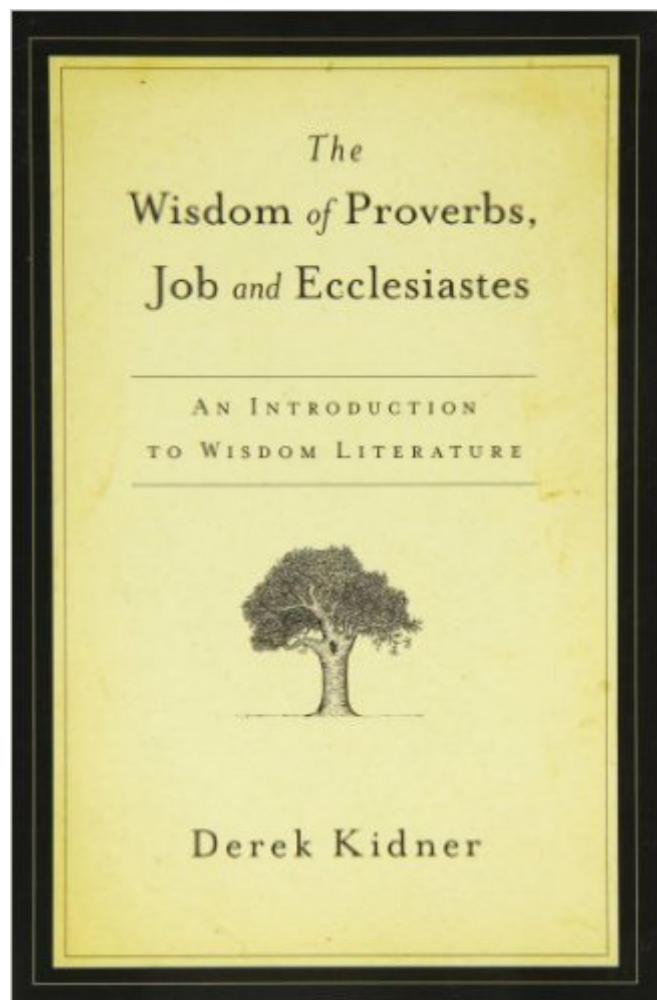


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The Wisdom Of Proverbs, Job & Ecclesiastes



Synopsis

"The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." In the Wisdom literature of the Bible we first hear the cool voice of a teacher calling us to think--to think hard and humbly. "How long will fools hate knowledge?" cries Wisdom in the book of Proverbs. Then in Job comes the anguished voice of the questioner, earnest enough to seek answers, honest enough to doubt easy ones. In Ecclesiastes the chastened tone of the Preacher warns of the vanity of all life under the sun. Sensitive to both literary form and theological content, Derek Kidner introduces Proverbs, Job and Ecclesiastes, explaining their basic character and internal structure. He also summarizes and evaluates the wealth of modern criticism focused on each book. Looking at all three books together, Kidner shows how their many voices compare, contrast and ultimately give a unified view of life. Kidner extends his analysis to include Ecclesiasticus and The Wisdom of Solomon from the Apocrypha, and he reprints excerpts from non-Israelite works that parallel the three major books treated.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I picked up this book because I was beginning an in-depth study of the book of Proverbs. I was expecting a blend of theological exposition and historical-cultural background; it missed the bar on the first, but definitely delivered on the second. If you want to understand the theology behind individual verses in the Wisdom Books, I would recommend sticking to commentaries or study Bibles. But if you're curious about the literary form and historical reasons for style and structure, this is a great book to dive into. Kidner's style of writing is academic but very readable. I found myself

enjoying his explanations, even when the historical references were a bit out of my range of knowledge. The organization of the book was logical, especially if you consider Kidner's note in the Preface about the more scholarly chapters (3,5,7), which could easily be skipped in favor of reading the chapter "Voices in Counterpoint." What I personally found useful in my study was reading chapters 2 (historical background) and 3 (form criticism) simultaneously, as I went through Proverbs itself - for instance, reading the sections on Proverbs 1-9 in both chapters when I began reading Proverbs 1, reading the sections on Proverbs 10-22 in both chapters when I began reading Proverbs 10, and so on. Doing that allowed me to read Proverbs with fresh understanding for the way the original audience would have received it, and gave me a better feel for the overall structure and continuity of the book (ie, it's not just a bunch of truisms thrown on a page - there really is an overarching logic behind the progression of statements). The final chapter connecting each of the Wisdom Books to each other was rather insightful as well.

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