

# Wisdom

*The Bible and Its Influence*

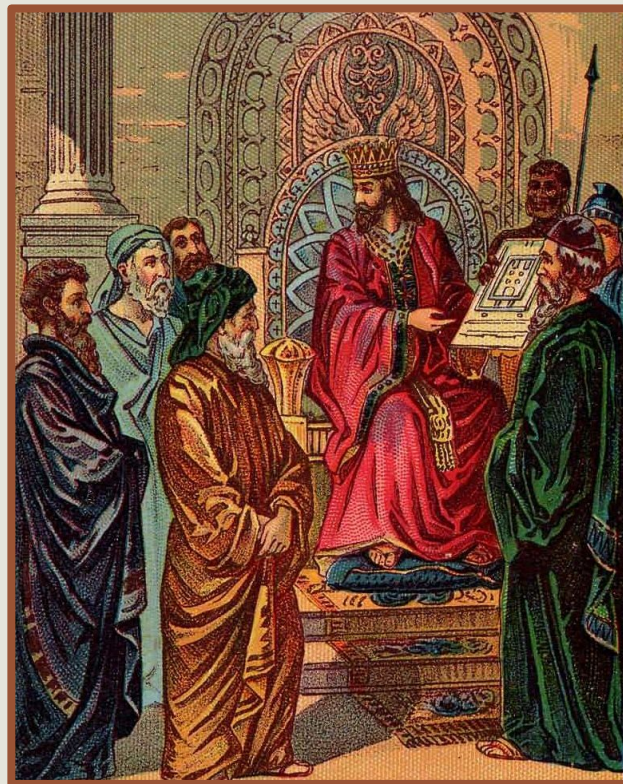
Chapter 14

Avery Tubach



# Proverbs

- Attributed to King Solomon
- 1 Kings credits him with 3000
- Words of wisdom in concise statements
- Rules to live and govern by
- Most widely quoted book of the Bible
  
- **“Those who spare the rod hate their children, but those who love them are diligent to discipline them” (13:24)**
  
- **“Like a dog that returns to its vomit is a fool who reverse to his folly” (26:11)**






# Structure

## Parallel Line Structure

- Stress differences between wisdom and folly
- Ex. “The wise man [*does something*] / But the fool [*does something else*]”

## Parable

- Teaching story
  - 6:6 “lazybones”
  - “Biblical embodiment of foolishness”
  - Central message of Proverbs is that wisdom comes from respecting and fearing God
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# Cardinal Virtues

Foundation for moral behaviors, depicted as female



Prudenza (Saggezza)



Giustizia



Fortezza



Temperanza

Prudence, Justice, Fortitude, Temperance

# Deadly Sins

- **Pride**- inflated sense of self- worth
- **Envy**- yearning and resenting what others have without looking at what one has
- **Anger**- unjustified rage or violence
- **Lust**- sexual appetite or illicit sexual behavior
- **Sloth**- spiritual and intellectual laziness, lack of will
- **Avarice**- unjust taking of material goods or money
- **Gluttony**- overindulgence of food and drink



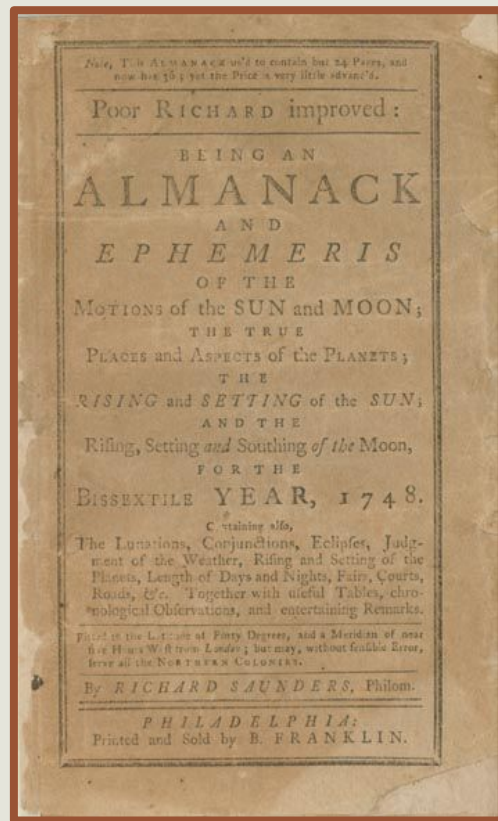
Painted tabletop by Hieronymus Bosch for King II of Spain



# Influences

## *Poor Richard's Almanac*

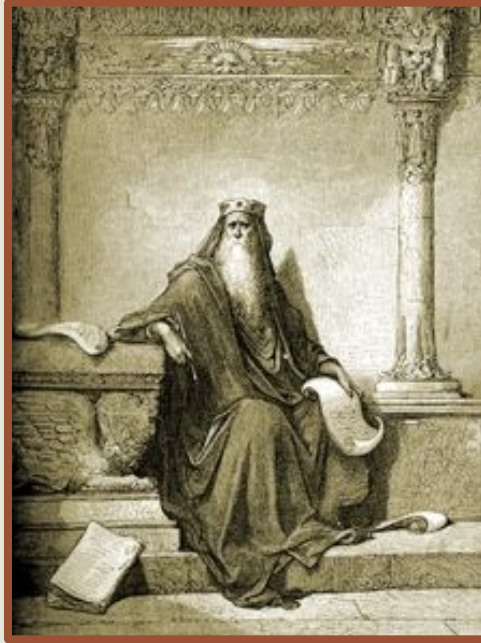
- Annual publication of advice by Benjamin Franklin
- Published from 1732-1757
- “Early to bed and early to rise, makes a man healthy, wealthy, and wise”
- “Don’t throw stones at your neighbors, if your own windows are made of glass”



# Ecclesiastes

## Koheleth

- Book is attributed to Solomon but the speaker is **Koheleth**
- Most modern feeling book of the Bible
- Gathers wisdom through observation and error
- Questions of justice, meaning, and the creation of happiness



## Emphasis on Death


- Immortality through the afterlife was not yet a concept
- Life is short and death ends your existence
- Dead go to Sheol
- Koheleth stresses finding meaning in life through enjoying the gifts of life and relationships



“There is nothing new under the sun”  
(1:9)

“Surely there is no one on earth so  
righteous as to do good without ever  
sinning” (7:20)

“So I commend enjoyment, for there is  
nothing better for people under the sun  
than to eat, and drink, and enjoy  
themselves, for this will go with the in  
their toil through the days of life that  
Gods gives them under the sun” (8:15)





# Influences

Inspired the genre of *memento mori* (remember mortality) paintings

- *Still Life with Skull*, Paul Cezanne
- *Allegory of Vanity*, Trophime Bigot



# Song of Songs

- Dialogue between a lover and beloved
- Perspective shifts between the two
- Explicit representation of erotic love

Let him kiss me with the  
kisses of the mouth! For your  
love is better than wine!

I am black and beautiful, O  
daughters of Jerusalem, like  
the tents of Kedar, like the  
curtains of Solomon

I am a rose of Sharon, a lily  
of the valleys.

He brought me to the  
banqueting house, and his  
intention toward me was  
love.

(Song of Songs 1:2, 5; 2:1, 4,  
10)

# Interpreting Song of Songs

## Love story

- Judaism celebrates the body as God's creation
- Marital sexuality as an example of the covenant between God and humans
- Incorporated in Jewish and Christian wedding ceremonies



## Metaphor for God's marriage to people

- Allegory of love/marriage between God and people of Israel
- OR**
- God and the Church
- OR**
- God and human souls
- 
- Interpretations differ due to God not appearing in the text

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