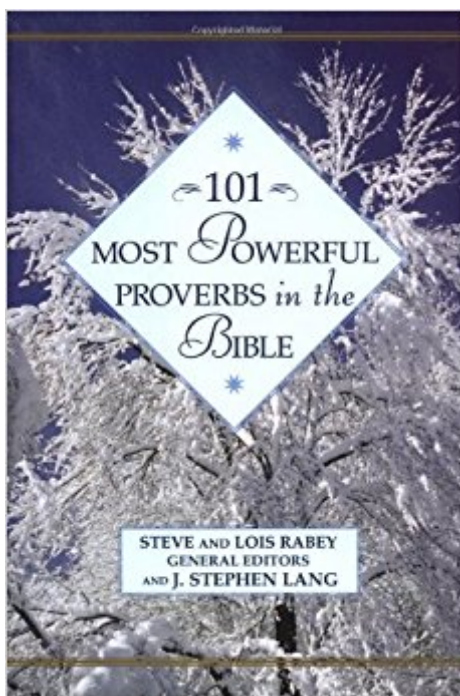


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101 Most Powerful Proverbs In The Bible (101 Most Powerful Series)



Synopsis

101 MOST POWERFUL PROVERBS IN THE BIBLE takes the best of the proverbs and details them for us. Filled with illustrations of daily life, it seeks to remind us of what's truly important--living wisely, kindly, and well.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This heavily anecdotal, occasionally touching and exasperatingly uneven collection of meditations surveys the Book of Proverbs, the venerable aphorisms of Hebrew scripture, as an extended lesson in character development. The reader will come away with a helpful sense of the range of topics covered by the ancient Proverbs writers, who were capable of comforting clarity about what happens to fools and evildoers and also of caustic observations about money management (and mismanagement) that could be ripped from today's financial pages. Drawing on sources as diverse as his immediate family, Calvin Coolidge and the rock group the Eagles, Lang portrays Proverbs as a collection of fundamental lessons in morality that need to be relearned in each generation.

Although Lang, a well-established author and former book editor, is clearly well versed in European and American history, he sometimes descends to gross generalizations, e.g., "the main reason that so many cities today are hellish places to live is that so many of the inhabitants have no self-control." Some will be amused, and some probably annoyed, by the writer's fondness for Confederate General "Stonewall" Jackson and the 16th-century Scottish Protestant firebrand John

Knox. Lang's essays are often powerful, occasionally incisive and more often than not instructive. Like the other books in the "101 Most Powerful" series (previous installments have explored biblical prayers and promises), each brief meditation closes with a resolution for readers; some of these are useful, some close to silly. Copyright 2003 Reed Business Information, Inc.

I have to admit I'm not that fond of most so-called "devotional" books, since they seem a little stuffy. This one isn't, not a bit. The chapters dealing with 101 verses from Proverbs take a unique and refreshing perspective on these ancient bits of wisdom. Just one curious example, a chapter on Proverbs 22:2, which reads "Rich and poor have this in common: The Lord is the Maker of them all." The chapter talks about, of all things, iced tea, which is called "the Great Southern Exercise in Democracy," noting that in the heat of summer, rich and poor Southerners all quench themselves with the same refreshing drink. My first reaction to this chapter was that it seemed a bit shallow, but it occurred to me that it was a perfect parable illustrating the Proverb. I also liked the chapters dealing with child-rearing. The Bible takes a pretty sober view of kids and the need to discipline and correct them, and so does this book, which includes some rather painful stories about how children behave when adults let them do as they please. Anyway, all in all I found this very enjoyable to read, especially since it introduced me to some Proverbs I wasn't familiar with. Since the chapters cover practically every sphere of human activity, this would make a nice gift book for practically anyone, especially with its attractive cover.

The biblical Book of Proverbs is more of a values tome providing guidance on how to live in harmony in one's daily life. The 101 MOST POWERFUL PROVERBS IN THE BIBLE looks at particular proverbs chosen by the author as the most critical to adhere to in the consideration of others. The admired scripture adages provide guidance on a wide range of subjects that if followed lead to a complete positive person helping one's family, religion, and community, which in turn helps the person become productive. Amazingly though from ancient writings, these seem apropos in the information age of corporate scandal, school massacres, suicide bombings, and weapons of mass destruction. Each of the chosen ones include anecdotes and essays by J. Stephen Lang that are intended to further provide deep yet simplistic morality instructions in a modern text. However, that is the strength and weakness of the book as some make sense and add depth while others seem inane and seemingly unrelated. When Mr. Lang enhances the proverb with a powerful essay, the book takes off; when he seems to be adding filler the tome falls flat. Still worth reading, the audience should follow those that logically add depth and skip over those don't. Harriet Klausner

I mean this literally, for this book is practical and enjoyable, just as the Book of Proverbs is. I'm one of those people who has zero interest in theology, but I do have an interest in the Bible as a guide to living in the world. That is what the Proverbs are all about, ditto for these 101 brief meditations on some of the best Proverbs. The author does what some of the best preachers and writers do, pairing off Bible references with incidents from his own experience, relating to marriage, children, self-control, and other nuts-and-bolts matters we all deal with on a daily basis. This isn't "fancy" writing, just very direct, presenting readers with the Bible's very sane view of how to get along well (and morally) with one's fellow human beings. Most of the chapters were well written, but in particular the story about the "women without discretion," who had aged well on the outside but was an immoral wreck inwardly. Don't we all know people like that? Anyway, a hearty thumbs-up for this book.

What attracted me to this book when I opened it in a local bookstore was a chapter with the title 'Pig Snouts and Sequins.' With that provocative title, I just had to read on. That chapter looks at Proverbs 11:22, a verse about a 'beautiful woman without discretion.' Well, every woman (and man) I know has met that type of woman, and the author of this book shows a real understanding of her type, and of the verse from Proverbs. I was hooked enough to buy this book, which has truly deepened my appreciation for the insights of Proverbs. Each short chapter looks at one particular verse from Proverbs, and gives some insight into everyday matters--gossip, honesty, temper, beauty-without-discretion, materialism, and the list goes on. I like all the books in this '101' series, but this is my favorite, since I think it is really the most practical book about the Bible I've read in a long long time.

The Book of Proverbs in the Bible is, in my opinion, seriously underrated. I think this book on the 101 Most Powerful Proverbs may help to remedy that, for it makes these 2000-year-old bits of wisdom come to life. I was truly amazed at how contemporary the Proverbs are. The author has chosen a wide selection of the Proverbs on a variety of topics--parenting, marriage, gossip, self-control, time management--and devoted a short chapter to each, illustrating each individual proverb with lessons from his own experience or from history. I think the best of the chapters dealt with self-control, or maybe that's just my own bias (since everyone I know, myself included, seems to need a lot more self-control!). It is a good book for just browsing through, and if the other books in this '101' series are this good, I think it's going to be a great series.

I give this collection of devotional essays a definite thumbs-up. Maybe the reason I give it 4 stars instead of 5 is that it's like the Book of Proverbs in the Bible--not all of it applicable to my own life, so here and there a chapter didn't really interested me much. But I do like this approach of building a brief chapter around one verse from Proverbs, especially since a lot of them have to do with money matters, which is something we can all relate to. The book displays a huge amount of common sense, which (as it says in the Intro) isn't nearly as common as it should be. I guess my favorite sections were the ones dealing with bad companions, since I went through a phase years ago of having the worst kind of friends. I can recommend this book, with one caveat: just skip the chapters whose subjects don't really apply to your own life.

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