



Wisdom Literature

What is Wisdom Literature?

Interpreting the Text:

1. Wisdom literature maintains that there is a type of knowledge of God and God's ways that is discoverable not through revealed law but from the natural world. Where have you seen this theme in the Bible?
2. Does thinking about wisdom literature as self-aware and man-made change the way you view proverbial biblical wisdom?
3. Do you find the Bible is instructional for current, every-day life, or is it designed to provide wisdom for people in a different time and place?

Applying the Text:

1. If we reframe "wisdom literature" as instructional texts, it becomes easier to see the contradictions within them. Whose instruction do you follow in your life, and is that instruction contradictory? What can we make of that?
2. How do we as modern readers vest authority in the wisdom books despite their self-consciously non-divine origins? Why is ancient parental or scribal wisdom part of our scriptural canon?
3. Is "wisdom" an eternal constant, or is it culturally and contextually dependent? How do wisdom texts from the Bible understand our answer to this question?