



in partnership with



OT5303 Old Testament Wisdom Literature

3 credits. Prerequisites: none.

Mississauga Campus Livestream Video on Demand

September 7-11, 2026

Fall 2026

Monday-Friday; 10 am – 5 pm ET (8 am – 3 pm SK)

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Please note: This course includes reading before and during the module

Course Goals

Course Description

This course explores the Wisdom Literature of the Old Testament, with a particular emphasis on Proverbs, Job, and Ecclesiastes. While the study explores historical, literary, and theological issues related to these texts, emphasis will also rest upon how ancient Israelite wisdom speaks to the everyday issues of human life, work, suffering, and loss.

Relationship to Horizon and MCS's Missions

This course contributes to the seminary's mission of equipping Spirit-empowered leaders for ministry by developing students' competency in interpreting the Old Testament Wisdom Literature and applying its theological and practical insights to preaching, teaching, pastoral care, discipleship, and personal spiritual formation.

Course Competencies and Learning Outcomes

To demonstrate competency in **Biblical & Theological Literacy**, students will:

1. Interpret the OT wisdom literature in light of its literary and socio-historical contexts, and distinct theological perspective with the assistance of relevant secondary literature.
 - *Assessment:* Presentation; Theological Reflections; Exegetical Paper.
2. Describe the key interpretive issues that are critical for understanding the OT wisdom literature.
 - *Assessment:* Scripture Reading Questions; Presentation; Theological Reflections; Exegetical Paper
3. Identify and explain key emphases and their significance within the OT wisdom literature.

- *Assessment:* Presentation; Theological Reflections; Exegetical Paper
- 4. Explain how the theological witness of the OT wisdom literature speaks to the way we think, live, and minister today.
 - *Assessment:* Presentation; Theological Reflections; Exegetical Paper

Course Work

Required Readings

Longman, Tremper. *The Fear of the Lord Is Wisdom: A Theological Introduction to Wisdom in Israel*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2024. (ISBN: 978-1540968821)
[DTL](#)

Curtis, Edward M. *Interpreting the Wisdom Books: An Exegetical Handbook*. Handbooks for Old Testament Exegesis. Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Academic, 2017. (ISBN: 978-0825442308)
[DTL](#)

****While students have the benefit of accessing many of their textbooks online through the [Digital Theological Library](#), they will not have access to the Digital Theological Library upon graduation. Therefore, we encourage students to purchase select textbooks to build their personal library.**

Course Assignments and Activities

Before and During Module Assignments

1. Scripture Reading Assignment.

Before and throughout the module week, students are expected to read the books of Job, Proverbs, and Ecclesiastes according to the course schedule. These readings are essential for meaningful participation in lectures, discussions, and class activities.

Reading Schedule:

- Job – Complete before the first day of class (Monday)
- Proverbs – Complete before Wednesday's class session
- Ecclesiastes – Complete before Thursday's class session

Although the reading assignment and accompanying questions will be submitted together after the module, students are expected to stay current with the reading schedule so they are prepared for each day's classroom interaction.

- **Due date:** September 7 at 10am ET, September 9 at 10am ET, September 10 at 10am ET

2. Scripture Reading Questions – 15%

As you complete each assigned biblical book, develop a list of thoughtful questions that arise from your reading. These questions should demonstrate careful engagement with the text and may address issues such as literary features, historical background, theological themes, interpretive challenges, or aspects of the text that require further study.

Prepare at least one typed page of questions for each biblical book (Job, Proverbs, and Ecclesiastes). Number each question and format the document with:

- Times New Roman, 12-point font
- One-inch margins
- Single-spaced text

These questions are intended to cultivate careful observation and critical reflection, serving as a starting point for class discussion and deeper interpretation during the intensive.

Upload the assignment to Populi by the assigned due date following the module's completion.

- Related learning outcome(s): #2
- **Assignment length:** 3 pages minimum (single-spaced).
- **Due date:** Friday, September 11.

3. *Class Presentation* – 15%

Each student will prepare and deliver a 15–20-minute class presentation on an assigned passage from Job, Proverbs, or Ecclesiastes. The passage must be selected in consultation with, and approved by, the professor prior to the on-campus module.

The purpose of this assignment is to demonstrate the student's ability to interpret a biblical text responsibly, engage relevant scholarship, and communicate its theological message effectively in a classroom setting.

Presentation Requirements

Your presentation should demonstrate careful exegesis of the assigned passage and include the following elements, as appropriate:

1. An introduction to the passage and its literary and historical context.
2. A clear explanation of the passage's meaning, including significant theological themes.
3. Discussion of important interpretive issues, including interaction with relevant scholarly perspectives.
4. Appropriate contemporary application or illustration.
5. Engagement with the class through discussion questions, activities, or other interactive methods.

Students are encouraged to use presentation aids such as PowerPoint slides, handouts, charts, or other visual resources that enhance learning.

Teaching Notes

Each presentation must be accompanied by **a minimum of two typed pages, single-spaced, of teaching notes**, submitted to the professor on the day of the presentation.

The format of the teaching notes is flexible; however, they should provide sufficient detail to demonstrate the student's preparation and interpretive process. At a minimum, the notes should include:

- the biblical passage addressed;
- the main teaching outline;

- significant exegetical observations;
- interaction with relevant course readings and scholarly resources; and
- key application points.

Evaluation

The presentation will be evaluated on the basis of:

- the quality and accuracy of the biblical interpretation;
- engagement with relevant scholarship;
- understanding of the literary, historical, and theological context;
- clarity, organization, and effectiveness of the presentation;
- meaningful interaction with the class; and
- the quality and completeness of the teaching notes.

Students are expected to consult the assigned course textbooks and 2-5 other appropriate scholarly resources in preparing both the presentation and the accompanying teaching notes. Presentations will be scheduled during the module week, **Wednesday through Friday**.

VOD Students should record their presentation, upload it to a content-hosting site like YouTube, OneDrive, Loom, etc., and submit the link on Populi to the professor.

- Related learning outcome(s): #1, 2, 3, 4.
- **Assignment length:** 2 pages / 15-20 minutes
- **Due date:** Module Week (Wednesday – Friday)

Post-Module Assignments & Reading

4. *Textbook Reading.*

Post-module week, students will continue reading the course textbook in order to support and strengthen their understanding of Old Testament Wisdom Literature and to assist them in completing their remaining assignments.

This reading is not tied to a separate written assignment or percentage grade. Instead, it is required preparation that will directly support your assignments. Students should complete this reading gradually over the weeks following the module and ensure it is finished before submitting their final course assignments.

Engaging these chapters carefully is essential for successful completion of the course requirements and for deeper understanding of the biblical wisdom books.

5. *Theological Reflections on Wisdom Literature* – 30%

The purpose of Theological Reflection papers (9 Reflections; 400-500 words each) is to evaluate students' capacity to theologically reflect, identify important interpretive challenges that are crucial for understanding the text, and demonstrate their aptitude for conveying the biblical message to contemporary audiences. This assignment also gives students the opportunity to engage Scripture through both the mind and heart. It invites students to integrate their beliefs and practices.

Students will write **nine** short Reflection/Response papers (400-500 words): three reflections on Job, three on Proverbs, and three on Ecclesiastes. Two people may work together on the Reflection papers.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION PAPERS

1. For each reflection paper, select **one chapter** from the assigned biblical book. Students will write **three reflections on Job, three on Proverbs, and three on Ecclesiastes**, choosing a different chapter for each reflection. Each reflection should focus on a single chapter.
2. Each paper should include the following 4 elements:
 - a. **Discuss how the biblical text informs your theology** as it relates to one (and only one) of the following topics (This section should be 200-300 words):
 - i. The nature and character of God
 - ii. The plan and purpose of God
 - iii. One of these doctrines: salvation, sanctification, Holy Spirit, sin, healing, eschatology, ecclesiology, and anthropology.
 - iv. The nature of revelation and/or doctrine of the Holy Scripture.
 - v. Epistemology (the nature of truth and means to acquiring knowledge).
 - b. **Identify one aspect of this passage that may create tension in our theology or practice**, something that tends to make us feel uncomfortable, or that requires discernment. How does this tension and struggle with the text contribute to our spiritual growth? This topic can relate to the same theological area as part one above (50-100 words).
 - c. **Explore how this text forms and shapes our affections and desires.** That is, how does the text transform the heart? Describe any affections/emotions that are provoked and brought to the surface by the text. Does the text generate gratitude, love, compassion, courage, hope, joy, or a combination of these? (50-100 words)
 - d. **Describe one way that the text contributes to your spirituality.** Explain how the text relates to one of the following topics (50-100 words):
 - i. One of the spiritual disciplines (prayer, fasting, witnessing, testimony, giving, study, etc.)
 - ii. Worship
 - iii. The community of faith
 - iv. The divine-human relationship
 - v. Spiritual formation
 - vi. Ministry formation
 - vii. The sacraments

See Populi for an example of a Theological Reflection Paper.

- Related learning outcome(s): #1, 2, 3, 4.
- **Assignment length:** 400-500 words each.
- **Due date:** Reflection 1: September 14; Reflections 2 & 3: September 21; Reflections 4 & 5: September 28; Reflections 6 & 7: October 5; Reflections 8 & 9: October 13.

6. Exegetical Paper – 40%

The term paper is designed primarily to evaluate students' ability to do quality research and writing, to think critically, to approach the text theologically, and to communicate effectively. The term paper should be the culmination of your work, demonstrating your ability to do constructive biblical scholarship.

Students must write a 10-12-page (3500-5000 words), typewritten (double-spaced) term paper conforming to the instructions given below. The paper will be written following the Horizon & MCS Format Guide. See the pertinent section in the syllabus Bibliography for numerous sources for this assignment.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR EXEGETICAL RESEARCH PAPER:

FORM

1. Follow the [Horizon & MCS Format Guide](#) consistently.
2. The bibliography **must** include at least three Old Testament introductions, ten commentaries, five journal articles, and five monographs. A monograph is a book that focuses on a particular subject in the Wisdom Literature. Your textbooks may serve as monographs. These categories must be listed separately, with headings, in the bibliography.
3. Footnotes must be placed at the bottom of the page. You must adhere to the guidelines given below as regards footnoting and quoting. Furthermore, due to the concise nature of this paper, direct quotes should be used sparingly. In following a source, **you should rely primarily upon summary and paraphrasing.**
4. Use Times New Roman font, 12-point type, one-inch margins, and double-spaced lines.
5. The finished paper must include the following parts:
 - Title Page
 - Table of Contents
 - Body of the Paper
 - Bibliography
 - Sermon Outline (The sermon outline is separate from the body of the paper)
6. The body of the paper should be 10-12 pages (3000-3600 words; does not include the sermon outline).
7. Upload your final paper to Populi.
8. Please arrange a backup for your computer files, either in the cloud or on a flash drive, to avoid losing your paper entirely.

CONTENT

- I. Choose a passage from Job, Proverbs, or Ecclesiastes. For this assignment, you will conduct a detailed, verse-by-verse analysis of a single passage. Because of the depth of analysis required, you should select a passage that is manageable in length. Ideally, choose one that contains between 6 and 20 verses. This will allow you to explore the text thoroughly without becoming overwhelmed. Avoid very short passages that may not offer enough material for analysis, as well as very long ones that could go beyond the intended scope of the paper.
- II. The body of the paper should include the following five sections:

A. Introduction

The introduction of any exegetical paper helps to introduce your reader to your research. The introduction draws your reader's attention and contextualizes the breadth and focus of your paper's topic. Your introduction should contain a thesis statement. You may use the following thesis statement as an example: "This paper uses exegesis to explore the significance of Hannah's song to the book of Samuel." (100-200 words).

B. Exegesis

The bulk of your paper should include an exegesis of a specific passage in OT Wisdom Literature (5-7 pp). The structure of your discussion may vary, depending on the Psalm. You should pay attention to structure, literary features, ancient context, theological function, and implications for Pentecostal theology in your ministry context.

When analyzing the passage, consider the following questions: What is the outline, that is the apparent divisions and subdivisions of the passage? What distinguishes these parts? What holds them together? What are the prominent themes, words, repetitions, contrasts, or symbolisms, etc., and how do they function in the passage? What is the perspective, style, mood, etc.? What is the progression, development, climax, focal point, etc.? How does the passage reflect, respond, or relate to the surrounding verses and chapters? To the book as a whole? To the surrounding historical and sociological situations? To the themes, patterns, and traditions found elsewhere in the Old Testament or in the ancient world? What audience is being addressed? What response is being called for? How might this passage be speaking beyond its own day even unto our own? In light of the foregoing considerations, how is your faith and practice formed, informed, or transformed by this passage? How does your faith impact your interpretation of this passage, and how does this passage speak to your particular faith tradition?

Sermon Outline

Purpose of the Sermon Outline: One of the Learning Outcomes for this course calls for the student to be able to communicate the message of the Bible. Your writing of the paper demonstrates your ability to read and interpret the biblical text well and to communicate to the academic audience, and your preaching /teaching outline should demonstrate your ability to communicate to the local church audience.

- a. Method: The preaching/teaching outline should embody a practical approach that exemplifies your own vision for communicating the message of the passage you have studied.
 - b. Structure: The preaching/teaching outline should include the following elements:
 - i. Title, Scripture Reference, Introductory statement (1 or 2 sentences),
 - ii. Thesis statement,
 - iii. Main points (and sub-points if desired) accompanied by concise sentences that encapsulate each point,
 - iv. Concluding statement (1 or 2 sentences),
 - v. Statement of Desired Outcome (what you hope your hearers will do in response to your preaching).
- **Length of Sermon:** 1-2 pages.

Step-by-Step Guide for Exegesis:

- a. Analyze the sections of the text that are relevant to the main themes you are developing or that support your thesis statement.
- b. Examine the immediate literary context and larger context of your text.
- c. Identify the genre of the text or passage. It could be speech, hymn, song, psalm, prophecy, dialogue, genealogy, parable, poetry, or narrative.
- d. Note any literary features such as chiasms, repetitions, parallels, etc., as well as the outline of the structure.
- e. Recognize the unique vocabulary, play words, allusions, accents, rhetoric, rhythm, etc.
- f. Explore the main theological insights and issues raised or solved through the text. Also, locate the application and relevance of the text. The commentaries will help you gain a theological perspective of the text. As you write your exegesis, you must integrate your insight with that of biblical scholarship.
- g. Cite! Cite! Cite! You must document your sources appropriately.

See Populi for an example of an Exegetical Paper.

- Related learning outcomes: #1, 2, 3, 4.
- **Assignment length:** 10-12 pages (3000-3600 words; double-spaced). Sermon Outline Length: 1-2 pages.
- **Due date:** October 30.

Video-on-Demand (VOD) Student Requirements

As indicated on the course schedule, this class is offered by VOD. Students taking the course through VOD are required to indicate this during their course registration. While VOD recordings are available for any student who may be absent from class, non-VOD students are expected to attend class live following the class attendance policy.

- For this course, VOD students have *the same* assignment due dates as in-class students.
- According to the schedule below, VOD students are required to watch and engage with all lecture content and in-class activities. VOD students will submit a 2–3-minute video report that 1) affirms you have watched the required recording, 2) summarizes one thing you learned that will help you reach the course learning outcomes, and 3) explains at least one question you had after watching the class recording.
 - Day 1 Lectures and Report due Saturday, September 12 at 11:59 pm EST
 - Day 2 Lectures and Report due Saturday, September 19 at 11:59 pm EST
 - Day 3 Lectures and Report due Saturday, September 26 at 11:59 pm EST
 - Day 4 Lectures and Report due Saturday, October 3 at 11:59 pm EST
 - Day 5 Lectures and Report due Saturday, October 10 at 11:59 pm EST
- Students registered to attend by VOD will fulfill the course attendance requirements through their video report submissions. They must submit their VOD reports on time to be registered as present for class.

Estimate of Time Investment (individual time investments may vary)

1. Scripture Reading Assignment	7 hrs	Sept 7, 9, 10	Assignment
Classroom time	30 hrs	N/A	Weighting
2. Scripture Reading Questions	3 hrs	Sept 11	15%
3. Class Presentation	13 hrs	Sept 9-11	15%
4. Textbook Reading	See assignment 6	N/A	N/A
5. Theological Reflections (x 9)	27 hrs	Sept. 14; 21; 28; Oct. 5; Oct. 13	30%
6. Exegetical Paper & Sermon Outline	35 hrs (paper) + ~15 hrs (reading)	October 30	40%
Total =	130 hrs		

All assignments are due at 8 pm **ET**.

Course Outline

Monday	Introductions & Syllabus
	Introduction to Wisdom Literature
	Introduction to Job
	Job: The Shape of Suffering
Tuesday	Job: Voices of Wisdom
	Introduction to Proverbs
Wednesday *Chapel, 12:15pm – 1:30pm ET (10:15am – 11 :30am SK)	Proverbs: The Two Ways of Life
	Proverbs: Hearing the Voice of Wisdom
Thursday	Proverbs: Wisdom in Speech and Action
	Introduction to Ecclesiastes
Friday	Ecclesiastes: The Hevel of Life
	Ecclesiastes: Fear God and Keep His Command

Pre-Module Reading Schedule:

- Job – Complete before the first day of class (Monday)
- Proverbs – Complete before Wednesday's class session
- Ecclesiastes – Complete before Thursday's class session

Post-Module Reading Schedule:

- Students are expected to read the textbooks as they complete their assignments

No assignments will be accepted after the course end date: November 2, 2026.

Academic Policies

General Guidelines for the Submission of Written Work

Please see the [Horizon](#) & [MCS](#) Format Guide for assignment submission, grammar, and formatting guidelines. The length of papers should fall within +/- 10% of the stated length. Papers that fall outside the length guidelines may not be graded. Assignments should be submitted via Populi under *Submissions* (not *Comments*). The resource at this [link](#) explains how to submit assignments on Populi.

Late Assignments and Extensions

Please contact the professor well in advance if you would like to request an adjustment to any of your due dates. No extensions will be granted beyond the end of the course unless approval is granted by Horizon's Assistant Academic Dean.

A late penalty will be assessed for all overdue assignments: 1-3 calendar days late, penalty of 10%; 4-6 calendar days late, penalty of 20%. After six days late, an assignment receives a grade of 0.

Grading

Grade	Percentage	GPA	Descriptor
A+	97-100%	4	Exceptional
A	93-96%	4	Excellent
A-	90-92%	3.7	Excellent
B+	87-89%	3.3	Good
B	83-86%	3.0	Good
B-	80-82%	2.7	Good
C+	77-79%	2.3	Satisfactory
C	73-76%	2.0	Satisfactory
C-	70-72%	1.7	Satisfactory
D+	67-69%	1.3	Minimal Pass
D	63-66%	1.0	Minimal Pass
D-	60-62%	0.7	Minimal Pass
F	<60%	0	Failure

Academic Integrity

Students learn best when practicing academic integrity. A lack of integrity is displayed in acts such as deception, abuse of confidentiality, cheating, inappropriate collaboration, or plagiarism. Plagiarism occurs when a student presents the words or ideas of another person or an artificial intelligence (AI) tool in such a way as to give others the impression that it is their own words or ideas. In academic writing, there should be no doubt which words or ideas are the student's and which are drawn from other sources or AI. Students are expected to submit their own original work and give due recognition to sources from which all substantial phrases, sentences, or even ideas are drawn. Note also that you may not submit work done in one course to satisfy the requirements of another course (unless both instructors agree beforehand to accept such work). See [here](#) for examples of plagiarism and further guidelines in the [Student Handbook](#).

Horizon and MCS have a subscription to software that ensures the originality of academic writing, verifies the proper citation of all sources, and detects AI-generated content. When you submit an assignment, you will automatically receive a summary on Populi that includes your submitted files along with an originality score (a high originality score is positive).

Artificial Intelligence (AI) Usage

In keeping with the Academic Integrity policy above, students must disclose on the title page of all assignments whether or not they have used AI and how they have used it. If the assignment has no title page, the student must disclose this to the instructor by some other means, such as in a comment on Populi. Students are expected to follow the policy for acceptable use of AI that is published in the [Horizon](#) and [MCS](#) Student Handbooks.

Accessible Learning Services Information

Horizon and MCS are committed to provide safe and inclusive learning environments which equalize the opportunity for students with disabilities to meet the requirements of the institutions, programs, and courses. The application for Academic Accommodations begins with a student disclosing a medical diagnosis or professionally documented learning disability during the application process. Enrolled students may contact Accessibility services personnel (at MCS, the Director of Academic Success, Wendy Holmes at wendy.holmes@mcs.edu; at Horizon, the Academic Accommodations Coordinator, Richelle Bekkattla at rbekkattla@horizon.edu). All Academic Accommodations will adhere to the Guiding Principles listed in the Student Handbooks. Students with documented accommodations on file pertaining to accessing course readings in alternate formats are encouraged to contact the librarian for assistance with as much advanced notice as possible.

Class Attendance

Students should attend all classes in order to facilitate competency development. Students are expected to be present through the delivery method that they registered for. Students registered to attend on-campus or via livestream must be present for the full duration of a class period to be marked as present for the class. Students registered to attend by VOD must submit their VOD reports on time to be marked as present for class. In the case of illness or other unforeseen circumstances, students may miss up to twenty percent of the total class time (e.g., one day of a module course, two 3-hour classes, etc.) without academic penalty. Students who are absent for more than this will automatically fail the course. Students wishing to be exempted from this policy due to extenuating circumstances may make an academic appeal, where they will need to document and verify those circumstances. Students who miss a class are responsible to get missed notes or handouts from another student, rather than from the professor.

Livestreaming Etiquette

Students taking the course through livestreaming are required to indicate this during their course registration. While livestreaming access is available for on-campus students who are unable to attend class due to illness, on-campus students are expected to attend class in person following the class attendance policy.

If attending class online via livestream, in order to be marked present for class, you must keep your camera on and stay present and attentive throughout the class session, extending the gift of

full engagement. Access your class with a computer (preferably) or tablet, not a cell phone. Arrive to class on time, and dress as you would if you were attending class on campus. Join the class from a quiet space with minimal background noise, and mute your microphone until you wish to speak to the class.

Use of Technology

Horizon and MCS encourage the use of electronic devices in the classroom to enhance learning. Careful consideration must be given to privacy issues, copyrighted materials, and the general care and concern for others. Please respect the following classroom policies:

- Please use online access for course learning only. This is a matter of respect for the instructor's teaching, your own learning, and fellow students who may be distracted by other uses.
- Students should secure permission from the instructor to record any teaching material. This includes PowerPoint slides, white board illustrations, notes, and any form of audio or video.
- Student feedback is a valuable input for course improvements. Please resolve any classroom grievance about the instructor or course with the instructor personally, through the Horizon College and Seminary grievance procedures, or the Populi-based course evaluations. It is inappropriate to air classroom grievances on a social media platform.
- When instructors use recording mechanisms in the classroom, recorded materials will be used for the sole purpose of instruction (potentially including future online video courses) and cannot be released to any social media outlet without the written consent of the students whose images have been recorded.
- In general, it is not acceptable to share photographs or videos of students in the classroom setting without permission from those whose images appear in such media.

Library Support and Research Assistance

Library staff are available to meet with students (online or in person) who need assistance with

- citing sources and identifying credible resources;
- developing research and information literacy skills;
- searching DTL and other library resources.

Bibliography

Wisdom Literature (General)

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Berry, Donald K. *An Introduction to Wisdom and Poetry of the Old Testament*. Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1995.

Boda, Mark J., Russell L. Meek, and William R. Osborne, eds. *Riddles and Revelations: Explorations into the Relationship between Wisdom and Prophecy in the Hebrew Bible*. LHBOTS 634. New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2018.

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- . *The Tree of Life: An Exploration of Biblical Wisdom Literature*. 3rd ed. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002.
- . *Wisdom Literature: Job, Proverbs, Ruth, Canticles, Ecclesiastes, and Esther. The Forms of the Old Testament Literature* 13. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1981.
- O'Donnell, Douglas Sean. *The Beginning and End of Wisdom: Preaching Christ from the First and Last Chapters of Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Job*. Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2011.
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- Rad, Gerhard von. *Wisdom in Israel*. Translated by James D. Marton. London: SCM, 1972.
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Proverbs

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