Humility in Proverbs

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Abstract:
This project utilizes thematic and exegetical methods to develop a practical definition of humility in Proverbs that fits within the greater framework of the book. Four verses in Proverbs explicitly use words translated “humility” in English (11:2; 15:33; 18:12; 22:4). The literary and theological connections between the Hebrew words in these four verses and the same Hebrew words in the rest of the Old Testament indicate that humility is complex, consisting of both internal and external characteristics. For instance, humility is demonstrated by obedience to God’s commands, justice for the oppressed, as well as an attitude of the heart.

Key Terms:
- Exegeses: the process of understanding what scripture says in its appropriate context
- Anavah (אָנָוָה): ‘humility/affliction/oppression’
- Hoc’mah (הכְּמָה): ‘wisdom’
- Musar (מעסֶר): ‘Correction/Discipline’
- Zadon (צדוֹן): ‘Pride’
- Kabod (כָּבוֹד): ‘Honor’

Outline:
1. Introduction
   a. While humility is not often stated in Proverbs it is an invaluable part of wisdom and learning to fear the Lord
2. Methodology
   a. Identifying verses of humility and pride
   b. Intertextual connections from key words
   a. Humility is related to wisdom, the fear of the Lord, and honor
   b. A haughty heart leads to downfall
4. Connections Leading to Overarching Themes
   a. All verses with similar forms of humility in the Old Testament
      i. Verses with connections to wisdom, discipline, pride, and honor Eternal Implications
      ii. Themes: Attitude of the Heart, Affliction/Oppression, Eternal Implications
   a. Relationship to Pride
   b. Relationship to Oppressed
6. Conclusions
   a. Humility represents an attitude of the heart in response to God’s teachings, also represents being poor and afflicted.
7. Theological Implications and Further Research
   a. Concept of humility in the New Testament
   b. Connections between humility and righteousness
Selected Annotated Bibliography:


This Hebrew-English lexicon is vital resource for exegetical work. It facilitates the researching of Hebrew words and the finding of pertinent Biblical connections. This resource is essential to my research.


This source seeks to address the lack of research done by biblical scholarship in the book of Proverbs. It challenges the idea that the structure of Proverbs lacks intentionality and is disorganized. This will be a good source for my research in terms of the overall structure of Proverbs.


This a respectable version of the Hebrew Scriptures. It allows for better access to God’s word in its original language. This resource is invaluable to my research.


This source seeks to provide a novel approach to the book of Proverbs that familiarizes the reader with the various themes and divisions of the book. It also addresses questions of authorship but for the most part provides a thematic understanding of Proverbs. This source will be helpful in the initiation of my project but not in the later stages.


This source provides the primary framework for conducting good exegesis. It was written as an aid to pastors and students who wish to produce an interpretation of the Scriptures that is faithful to the text. This resource is vital to my research because it provides the basic methodology for this project.