

Shona Proverbs and Parables

By Jacob Chikuhwa

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This collection of Shona Proverbs and Parables contains some of the most thought-provoking and contemporary proverbs and parables emerging from Zimbabwe. The collection links the pre-colonial Shona cultural expressions with the contemporary Shona folklore. The proverbs and parables offer penetrating questions and induce debate on the significance of the study of proverbs and parables. As well as being universal, they reflect their cultural roots. While the proverbs and parables provide amusement, they deftly impart lessons for living. The literal translations for each proverb and parable add insights for better understanding. There are times when "a small bird which does not search for food does not get fat", just as a person who is not willing to explore new ventures remains static. "A bird does not abandone its way of singing" like the old habits that die hard. What of "the one who recognises a path through a rock who is the only one that uses that path"! Surely, are those who are vociforous in condemning a wrong-doing not the chief culprits? It's no exaggeration to say this collection of Shona proverbs and parables is not only a source of inspiration to the young Zimbabwean generation, but has application for those studying African folklore and behaviour, sociology and ethics.

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