

The Pathway to Eternal Wisdom

[Part 14]

Proverbs 12:20 [NIV] *“There is deceit in the hearts of those who plot evil, but joy for those who promote peace.”*

The plans we shape, shape us!

What we pursue for others and the way we pursue it leaves a permanent impression on our character. Not only do the wicked speak lies, their mind is deceitful. Such an attitude of mind brings with it terrors and perplexities in the lives of all involved.

In contrast, joy is the by-product of all who plan and promote peace in all relationships and with all involved.

The Hebrew word translated “*peace*” is “*shâlôm*” which is more than lack of strife, it means welfare, health and prosperity.

To plan this for others is to enjoy the by-products ourselves.

Proverbs 12:21 [NIV] *“No harm befalls the righteous, but the wicked have their fill of trouble.”*

This is a general but **not** universal truth.

Although harm does befall the righteous, they are able to see opportunities of spiritual maturity in their problems.

James 1:2-4 [NIV] *“Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance. Perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.”*

We are being told to turn tough times into times of learning.

Romans 5:3-5 [NIV] *“Not only so, but we also rejoice in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope. And hope does not disappoint us, because God has poured out his love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, whom he has given us.”*

The meaning of the preposition translated “*into*” [v5] can be better translated “*through*” when we see the work of the Holy Spirit in **John 7:38-39**.

This indicates that if we face our trials with a positive attitude of mind we can be a vehicle of the Holy Spirit in extending the knowledge of God’s love for all humanity.

The wicked, without God’s Wisdom or the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, are ill-equipped to handle their problems, and persist in their sinful life.

Proverbs 12:22 [NIV] *“The LORD detests lying lips, but he delights in men who are truthful.”*

To lie is the foundation of all that is evil. [**John 8:44**]

To lie is to destroy any trust that we can have with any other person, hence destroying any fellowship.

To lie is to destroy love. For example if the Creator God lied just once in His Word, the Christian Bible, we could never believe any of the loving promises He has made to humanity.

Titus 1:2 [NIV] *“a faith and knowledge resting on the hope of eternal life, which God, who does not lie, promised before the beginning of time,”*

The fact that the Creator God cannot lie proves the love He has for us. All our hope of eternal life rests on the fact that God cannot lie.

Therefore God hates it when we lie for we are totally out of character with our Creator and Saviour, Jesus Christ, who is the truth itself. [**John 14:6**]

Proverbs 12:23 [NIV] *“A prudent man keeps his knowledge to himself, but the heart of fools blurts out folly.”*

The ability to keep quiet when it is **not** wise to express our thoughts and feelings about a situation shows a controlled mind that can exercise discretion.

Foolish people proclaim to everyone the folly and the emptiness of Godly Wisdom in their minds, all then know that they are fools.

Prudent people have a quiet confidence. Insecure people feel they need to prove themselves by showing off.

If we are modest, people may **not** notice us at first, but they will come to respect us later.

Proverbs 12:24 [King James] *“The hand of the diligent shall bear rule: but the slothful shall be under tribute.”*

The rulership is in the future tense so we need to examine the future reward and position that diligent people will inherit.

Revelation 1:4-6 [King James] *“John to the seven churches which are in Asia: Grace be unto you, and peace, from him which is, and which was, and which is to come; and from the seven Spirits which are before his throne; and from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.”*

Christians are, in the future, to be kings and priests [teachers] on the earth.

In the instructions to all the seven churches, one condition is mentioned, *“to him who overcomes.”* [**Revelation 2:7, 11, 17, 26; Revelation 3:5, 12, 21**]

Throughout these chapters there is a sense of urgency but also diligence on behalf of all the members of these true Christian Churches, all of which were in Asia, **not** Rome.

Revelation 20:11-13 [NIV] *“Then I saw a great white throne and him who was seated on it. Earth and sky fled from his presence, and there was no place for them. And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Another book was opened, which is the book of life. The dead were judged according to what they had done as recorded in the books. The sea gave up the dead that were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead that were in them, and each person was judged according to what he had done.”*

At this time is the major period when Christians will rule and teach. The Christian Bible will be open to all who have died never knowing Jesus Christ or understanding the Christian Bible. This is the rule that **Proverbs 12:24** is referring to.

The slothful will become forced labour, a very hard form of discipline, under the rule of the diligent. Life in the future will **not** be easy for them. [**Revelation 2:27; Revelation 19:15**]

Proverbs 12:25 [NIV] *“An anxious heart weighs a man down, but a kind word cheers him up.”*

Anxious, that is the end product of fear and sorrow, deprives people of the vigour to accomplish what needs to be done and the courage to face up to what has to be borne.

A good word, from the Christian Bible, some of the many promises that the Creator God has made, may **not** remove the reasons for anxiety but will give courage to face the circumstances which will eventually end.

Proverbs 12:26 [King James] *“The righteous is more excellent than his neighbour: but the way of the wicked seduceth them.”*

The Hebrew word translated “*excellent*” is “*tuwr*” referring to being a guide can also be translated “*abundant*.” It is **not** referring to the world’s goods but to their godly character that they reflect in the way they live. Thus fulfilling Jesus Christ’s command in **Matthew 5:14-16**.

Evil people vainly flatter themselves that their ways are **not** wrong but are a hindrance to others on the path to abundant life.

Proverbs 12:27 [NIV] *“The lazy man does not roast his game, but the diligent man prizes his possessions.”*

The lazy person’s way of life wastes the resources that the Creator God has provided for humanity. Waste is the sign of poor stewardship. The diligent person makes wise use of their possessions and resources, even if they are **not** abundant. Such an attitude of mind and action is telling our Creator God how grateful we are to Him for all that He has given us. [**Colossians 2:6-7; Philippians 4:6; Ephesians 5:20**]

Proverbs 12:28 [NIV] *“In the way of righteousness there is life; along that path is immortality.”*

We are blessed all the way by living a life that is in harmony with our Righteous Creator God.

We can experience eternal life now in this mortal physical life.

1 John 5:11 [NIV] *“And this is the testimony: God has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son.*

We experience this eternal life through the active indwelling of the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Christ [**Romans 8:9**], giving us an intimate relationship with the Creator God. [**John 17:3**]

We receive ultimate eternal life as a gift, also through faith in what God the Father has done through Jesus Christ for all humanity. [**Romans 8:23**]

Proverbs 13:1 [NIV] *“A wise son heeds his father’s instruction, but a mocker does not listen to rebuke.”*

The contrast between a person who is teachable and one who mocks at good advice. The mocker or scorner is a fool in the last stage of folly [**Proverbs 26:12**]. There is little hope for any person who will **not** listen to those who seek to teach them Godly Wisdom, such people are insufferable.

Proverbs 13:2 [NIV] *“From the fruit of his lips a man enjoys good things, but the unfaithful have a craving for violence.”*

Words can be fruitful or fatal. Spoken words pass away but their fruits remain. By our words we will be justified or condemned. [**Matthew 12:36-37**]

The Hebrew word translated “*unfaithful*” is “*bâgad*” meaning to act covertly, deal deceitfully and treacherous dealings. Such a person has a built-in appetite for violence against other human beings.

Proverbs 13:3 [NIV] *“He who guards his lips guards his life, but he who speaks rashly will come to ruin.”*

This is expanding on the previous verse.

A person who thinks before they speak, who suppresses any hostile thought, guards themselves from a great deal of guilt and grief.

James 3:5-6 [NIV] *“Likewise the tongue is a small part of the body, but it makes great boasts. Consider what a great forest is set on fire by a small spark. The tongue also is a fire, a world of evil among the parts of the body. It corrupts the whole person, sets the whole course of his life on fire, and is itself set on fire by hell.”*

The tongue is a small part of the body but a very powerful member for good or evil.

If we control our tongue we will have control over the rest of our life, ensuring it continues on the pathway to eternal life **not** fires of hell.

Proverbs 13:4 [NIV] *“The sluggard craves and gets nothing, but the desires of the diligent are fully satisfied.”*

The slothful desires the gains of the diligent but hates all the work involved, therefore they have nothing. We need to read this verse from a spiritual viewpoint, we **cannot** just drift into the Kingdom of God.

Matthew 11:12 [King James] *“And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force.”*

The Greek word used is *“biastes”* referring to being seized energetically with vital activity.

Matthew 6:33 [King James] *“But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.”*

The Greek words used are very active words. *“Seek”* is *“zētēō”* meaning a passionate desire and to go about seeking, **not** sitting and waiting for it to come.

“First” is *“prōtōn”* meaning foremost in time and order of importance. This is far more than one activity, on one day a week!

Proverbs 13:5 [King James] *“A righteous man hateth lying: but a wicked man is loathsome, and cometh to shame.”*

Righteousness and truth are constantly linked in the Christian Bible. To lie is to be working for Satan [**John 8:44**]. To tell the truth is to be following Jesus Christ [**John 14:6**].

Where sin reigns the person is loathsome in God’s eyes.

The Greek word used is *“bâash”* meaning a bad smell, odious and offensive. This is true even if the person shows all the religious trappings of a pious person. [**Isaiah 64:6**]

If such a person’s conscience were not defiled [**Titus 1:15; 1 Timothy 4:2**] they would abhor themselves and repent, seeking forgiveness from God.

The Hebrew word translated *“shame”* is *“châphêr”* meaning to be exposed, brought to reproach, as the real motive and character of this person is made known. [**Numbers 32:23; Ecclesiastes 12:13-14**]

Proverbs 13:6 [NIV] *“Righteousness guards the man of integrity, but wickedness overthrows the sinner.”*

An honest desire to do what is right, preserves a person from fatal mistakes. The rebellious attitude of wickedness “*overthrows*” Hebrew “*calâph*” to subvert or perverts the person.

Living in the right way is like posting a guard on our lives. Every choice to do good sets in motion other opportunities for good.

Evil choices follow the same pattern, but in the opposite direction.

Each decision we make to obey God’s Word, the Christian Bible, will bring a greater sense of order and purpose into our life. While each decision to disobey will bring confusion and eventually total destruction.

Proverbs 13:7 [NIV] “*One man pretends to be rich, yet has nothing; another pretends to be poor, yet has great wealth.*”

Don’t take a person at their own valuation.

We need to consider this Proverb from a spiritual viewpoint.

A person may be wealthy but **not** “*rich towards God.*” This is illustrated by the parable of Jesus Christ in **Luke 12:13-21**.

Nor can we separate this proverb from the thought of Jesus Christ who was rich beyond belief, yet for our sakes became poor.

2 Corinthians 8:9 [NIV] “*For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, so that you through his poverty might become rich.*”

In this example of our Saviour this proverb reaches its height of meaning.

Proverbs 13:8 [NIV] “*A man’s riches may ransom his life, but a poor man hears no threat.*”

Poverty has its compensations as does wealth.

Great riches are often a temptation for those without such wealth to use violence and blackmail against the rich person.

But the poor are free from such perils.

These two extremes may only meet in the presence of gangsters.

Ecclesiastes 5:11 [NIV] “*As goods increase, so do those who consume them. And what benefit are they to the owner except to feast his eyes on them?*”

A rich person may spend their fortune meeting their commitments towards the poor that they employ when their business fails. Many today have experienced this in today’s economy which is based on the wrong premise of the need for continual growth in the sale of personal possessions.

God’s basis for human life is founded on agriculture. [Please download our articles under the heading of ‘*Agriculture*’ on this website.]

Proverbs 13:9 [NIV] “*The light of the righteous shines brightly, but the lamp of the wicked is snuffed out.*”

The light of the righteous can be likened to the physical sun. It may be eclipsed or clouded but will continue to be there because it is powered by the eternal Holy Spirit in that person.

The lamp of the wicked is of their own kindling and is easily put out. As it is based on the rebellious nature of Satan it will eventually be put out permanently. [**Revelation 20:1-3; Revelation 20:10; Jude 6, 13; 2 Peter 2:4**]

Proverbs 13:10 [NIV] *“Pride only breeds quarrels, but wisdom is found in those who take advice.”*

All contentions whether between private persons, families, churches or nations are begun and carried forward by pride. Such disputes would be prevented or ended, if it were not for pride.

Godly Wisdom and humility of a mind that is **not** closed are the **only** pathway to reconciliation.

If we find that we are constantly arguing, we need to examine our lives for poison of pride.

Always be willing to admit our mistakes, for being human we all are bound to make wrong decisions and judgements. *“I was wrong”* or *“I need advice”* are difficult phrases to utter because they require humility, the opposite of pride.

Proverbs 13:11 [NIV] *“Dishonest money dwindles away, but he who gathers money little by little makes it grow.”*

This proverb is rooted in character and is an example of gambling, also inheritance. [**Proverbs 20:21**]

When we win a lottery or inherit wealth we do not value it because we have **not** had to work hard to gather it.

The second half of this proverb includes the thought of the toil that went to gather the wealth.

Proverbs 13:12 [NIV] *“Hope deferred makes the heart sick, but a longing fulfilled is a tree of life.”*

The word *“deferred”* does **not** imply a revising of what is promised, but the Hebrew word *“mashak”* means delayed or drawn out. The second line indicates that the subject being addressed is spiritual. Any promise made by God that is delayed by Him, is to help us develop character.

It proves to God that our request is in earnest. It also allows us to consider if our request is **not** just a selfish desire.

It helps us to develop patience. All of these help us to mature as Christians.

Luke 8:15 [King James] *“But that on the good ground are they, which in an honest and good heart, having heard the word, keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience.”*

Anyone knows that whatever we seek to grow from seeds involves patience, spiritual fruits are no different.

Romans 5:1-4 [King James] *“Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope:”*

It is our developing patience in our trials that leads us to have hope for the future.

Romans 8:25 [NIV] *“But if we hope for what we do not yet have, we wait for it patiently.”*

Most of hope as a Christian is in the future and unseen, so we need patience.

Hebrews 6:12 [King James] *“That ye be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises.”*

Faith is often linked with patience, because patience is the key to faith in our Creator God.

Proverbs 13:13 [King James] *“Whoso despiseth the word shall be destroyed: but he that feareth the commandment shall be rewarded.”*

Word and commandment are a reminder that revealed Word of God, the Christian Bible, are presupposed in the mind of the reader of Proverbs. This is necessary because the main thrust and purpose of Proverbs is spiritual and needs the indwelling of Holy Spirit to be fully understood. **[1 Corinthians 2:10-11]**

Any person who stands in awe of the Creator God and reverence towards His Word, the Christian Bible, will escape eternal death and be rewarded for their godly fear.

Proverbs 13:14 [King James] *“The law of the wise is a fountain of life, to depart from the snares of death.”*

The Hebrew word translated “law” is “*tôrâh*” which refers to the ten commandments plus all the precepts and statutes of the Old Testament part of the Christian Bible.

The words “*fountain of life*” are in Hebrew “*mâqôwr*” meaning source, natural flow, from the root word “*qûwm*” meaning make good, help, strengthen, establish.

“*Life*” is Hebrew “*chay*” meaning refreshing, maintenance, to live.

The ignoring of these laws, precepts and statutes, provided to live a rewarding life, is to have a personal death wish.

Proverbs 13:15 [King James] *“Good understanding giveth favour: but the way of transgressors is hard.”*

This Proverb is a continuation of the previous one.

The word translated “*understanding*” is “*sêkel*” referring to a person who is circumspect and is using the human spirit to seek right knowledge, that is God’s Wisdom as found in His Word, the Christian Bible.

Such a lifestyle results in “*favour*” Hebrew “*chên*” meaning pleasant and precious with the root word “*chânan*” meaning bestowed kindness. All this comes from the Creator God, whose words are being followed.

In contrast “*transgressors*” Hebrew word “*bâgad*” meaning treacherously unfaithful [to God’s laws] and deceitful.

The word “*hard*” is “*êthân*” meaning permanent, continual rough.

The way of transgressors to God’s Laws is hard upon others as well as the person themselves. This yielding to rebellion against the Creator God is the road to eternal death and is strewn with the thorns and thistles that follow a curse. **[Genesis 3:17-19]**

Proverbs 13:16 [NIV] *“Every prudent man acts out of knowledge, but a fool exposes his folly.”*

Our character, whether we realise it or not, is shown to be written all over our conduct in life.

A prudent person uses Godly Wisdom to direct their lives and this will be shown to others in their words and actions. The fool shows their folly by talking about things of which they know nothing and undertakes tasks that they are unfit to perform.