

The Pathway to Eternal Wisdom

[Part 16]

Proverbs 14:13 [King James] *“Even in laughter the heart is sorrowful; and the end of that mirth is heaviness.”*

The Hebrew word translated “laughter” is “shachatsowm” meaning derisive laughter, haughtiness and to strut. “Sorrowful” is Hebrew word “kâab” meaning pain and grief.

The Hebrew word translated “mirth” is “simchâh” meaning pleasure, rejoicing. The Hebrew word translated “heaviness” is “tûwgâh” meaning depression, sorrow, vexation.

What is this Proverb telling us?

There is in life tragedy, from which gaiety offers **no** full or final escape. [**Luke 6:21, 25; John 16:20-22**]

Our moods are seldom untinged with their opposites, and are none of them permanent.

Proverbs 14:14 [NIV] *“The faithless will be fully repaid for their ways, and the good man rewarded for his.”*

The two halves of this Proverb are well illustrated by the testimonies of two men called Saul in the Christian Bible.

King Saul – **1 Samuel 26:21** [NIV] *“Then Saul said, I have sinned ... surely I have acted like a fool and have erred greatly.”*

The self testimony of Saul as he neared the end of his reign as King of Israel. The testimony of one who turned his back on God.

Saul [renamed Paul] – **2 Timothy 4:7-8** [NIV] *“I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day, and not only to me, but also to all who have longed for his appearing.”*

A contrasting self-testimony of one who had dedicated his life to obey and serve the Creator God. A man who was faithful to the end of his life.

Proverbs 14:15 [NIV] *“A simple man believes anything, but a prudent man gives thought to his steps.”*

If we are gullible we are ignoring the human spirit within us that gives us the ability to think and to evaluate any statement or situation [**Job 32:8**] taking on hearsay **not** verified by ourselves.

The prudent person, Hebrew “ârûwm” from a root word “aram” which means to make bare, take counsel and be careful in our dealings. That is using to the full our human spirit but also it indicates the seeking of God’s wisdom, guarding against anything that is **not** in harmony with God’s Word, the Christian Bible.

Proverbs 14:16 [NIV] *“A wise man fears the LORD and shuns evil, but a fool is hotheaded and reckless.”*

The fear, awe and respect for our Creator God causes us to avoid all evil. The self-confident fool gets themselves into trouble and shame by **not** thinking before they speak. [**John 13:37-38**]

Proverbs 14:17 [NIV] *“A quick-tempered man does foolish things, and a crafty man is hated.”*

To act on the state of our feelings, not the merit of the situation is foolish. **Proverbs 14:29** shows us that we only see a situation clearly if we see it calmly.

The word “*crafty*” is the Hebrew word “*mezimmâh*” meaning to have an evil plan, or to plot evil, such as revenge.

Proverbs 14:18 [NIV] *“The simple inherit folly, but the prudent are crowned with knowledge.”*

This Proverb is **not** blaming a person’s folly on their heredity. A clearer translation of the word inherit, Hebrew “*nâchal*” meaning a mode of descent. In context this is warning the person that by dealing foolishly they are only storing up more and more foolishness until as in **v24**, foolishness is the only thing they have in life.

The prudent person, Hebrew “*ârûwm*” one who takes counsel and is careful in all their dealings is “*crowned*” Hebrew “*kâthar*” meaning to be compassed about, protected by wisdom.

Proverbs 14:19 [NIV] *“Evil men will bow down in the presence of the good, and the wicked at the gates of the righteous.”*

Even bad people reluctantly or unconsciously respect virtuous people. Being impressed by their presence and also in their judgement. “*Gates*” the Hebrew word “*shâar*” meaning gate keeper. In the Old Testament world the gate was the area of a city or town where commerce and law were transacted.

Proverbs 14:20 [NIV] *“The poor are shunned even by their neighbours, but the rich have many friends.”*

Friendship in the world is governed by self-interest, what can be gained personally from a friendship.

This is how the poor are avoided as friends and the rich are counted as “*friends*” as long as they remain rich!

Proverbs 14:21 [NIV] *“He who despises his neighbour sins, but blessed is he who is kind to the needy.”*

To despise a person for their employment or appearance is a total lack of love for that person, therefore is sin. This sin is against the Creator God who has given life to both humans. [**Proverbs 14:31**]

Job 31:13-23 [NIV] *“If I have denied justice to my menservants and maidservants when they had a grievance against me, what will I do when God confronts me? What will I answer when called to account? Did not he who made me in the womb make them? Did not the same one form us both within our mothers? If I have denied the desires of the poor or let the eyes of the widow grow weary, if I have kept my bread to myself, not sharing it with the fatherless, but from my youth I reared him as would a father, and from my birth I guided the widow, if I have seen anyone perishing for lack of clothing, or a needy man without a garment, and his heart did not bless me for warming him with the fleece from my sheep, if I have raised my hand against the fatherless, knowing that I had influence in court, then let my arm fall from the shoulder, let it be broken off at the joint. For I dreaded destruction from God, and for fear of his splendour I could not do such things.”*

In these verses we have illustrated how we should treat other human beings if we respect our Creator God.

Proverbs 14:22 [NIV] *“Do not those who plot evil go astray? But those who plan what is good find love and faithfulness.”*

To “go astray” refers to their misguided lifestyle.

Where a person’s policy in life is to have concern for the welfare of other people, such a person will find that the response is to receive kindness and trust.

Proverbs 14:23 [NIV] *“All hard work brings a profit, but mere talk leads only to poverty.”*

Talk is cheap but **not** productive. Politicians promise to make jobs to improve the economy, but it is those who are successful workers who give jobs to other people.

James 2:14-17 [NIV] *“What good is it, my brothers, if a man claims to have faith but has no deeds? Can such faith save him? Suppose a brother or sister is without clothes and daily food. If one of you says to him, ‘Go, I wish you well; keep warm and well fed,’ but does nothing about his physical needs, what good is it? In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead.”*

To talk about having faith or love is of **no** use unless it is backed up with acts of love and kindness towards other people. Faith in God and love for God and our fellow human beings is **only** proved by the way we react to others’ needs.

Proverbs 14:24 [NIV] *“The wealth of the wise is their crown, but the folly of fools yields folly.”*

The thing that the wise treasure most is their wisdom, for it gives their lives an all-round protection, the meaning of a crown. [v18] Folly only leads to more folly.

Proverbs 14:25 [NIV] *“A truthful witness saves lives, but a false witness is deceitful.”*

The special Christian overtones of this Proverb are to me very obvious. The true Christian witness is centred around Jesus Christ but the false and deceitful witness is of all who are in their message anti-Christ. [1 John 4:1-3; 1 John 2:18-22; 2 John 7]

Proverbs 14:26 [NIV] *“He who fears the LORD has a secure fortress, and for his children it will be a refuge.”*

Those who in fear and awe of the Creator God, obey and serve Him, will have a strong ground for confidence, because of God’s promises in His Word, the Christian Bible. Also their personal example and teaching will give their children safety from the evils of this world.

Proverbs 14:27 [NIV] *“The fear of the LORD is a fountain of life, turning a man from the snares of death.”*

Those who fear and obey God already experience the “fountain of life”, that is eternal life [1 John 5:11] and have then escaped from the finality of eternal death, trapped by our own un-repentant sins.

Proverbs 14:28 [King James] *“In the multitude of people is the king’s honour: but in the want of people is the destruction of the prince.”*

Self, solitary splendour soon fades, a person who serves **only** themselves receives little, if any, honour.

The true leader who lays down his life in the service of the people will be honoured by them.

Proverbs 14:29 [NIV] *“A patient man has great understanding, but a quick-tempered man displays folly.”*

Patience is something we learn after accepting Jesus Christ as our Saviour and Master and knowing the promises He has made to His disciples. [Romans 5:1-4]

In contrast a quick-tempered person can be like a fire out of control, it can burn them and everyone else in its path.

Anger divides people.

Anger pushes us into ill-thought-out decisions that only cause bitterness and guilt.

Anger is **not** wrong in itself, it can be a legitimate godlike reaction to injustice and sin. [**Romans 1:18-32; Ephesians 5:1-6**]

Proverbs 14:30 [King James] *“A sound heart is the life of the flesh: but envy the rottenness of the bones.”*

The Hebrew word translated “*sound*” is “*marpê*” meaning placid, yielding, tranquil.

Envy results in “*rottenness*,” Hebrew “*râqâb*” decay to the “*bones*” Hebrew “*etsem*” meaning substance or strength.

All this indicates a person who has found contentment in life.

Philippians 4:11-13 [NIV] *“I am not saying this because I am in need, for I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances. I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. I can do everything through him who gives me strength.”*

The key was that Paul allowed Jesus Christ, through the indwelling of Holy Spirit, to direct his life.

Proverbs 14:31 [NIV] *“He who oppresses the poor shows contempt for their Maker, but whoever is kind to the needy honours God.”*

Assisting the poor, both physically poor but also spiritually poor, is a large part of Christian attitude of mind.

James 2:5 – God’s choice of people at this time.

1 John 3:17-18 – proof of Christian sincerity is to have compassion on the physical and spiritual poor. [**Amos 8:11-13**]

Proverbs 17:5; Proverbs 19:17; Proverbs 22:2; Proverbs 28:8; Proverbs 19:13 with such repetition and attitude toward the poor, physically and spiritually must be very important to the Creator God.

Proverbs 14:32 [NIV] *“When calamity comes, the wicked are brought down, but even in death the righteous have a refuge.”*

“*Brought down*” is Hebrew “*dâchach*” meaning outcast or overthrown. This happens in the middle of their wickedness.

In total contrast the righteous even have peace of mind in their physical death. [**Psalms 31:5**]

This hope is based on the promises of a Creator God who **cannot** lie. [**Titus 1:2**]

Proverbs 14:33 [NIV] *“Wisdom reposes in the heart of the discerning and even among fools she lets herself be known.”*

A wise person does **not** parade their wisdom before other people, but allows their words and actions to reveal it.

A fool parades their lack of wisdom. [**Proverbs 12:23**]

While the true abode of wisdom is with those who humbly recognise their need for it. [**James 1:5-8**]

Even among fools there is a limited recognition of the need for Godly wisdom. [**Proverbs 17:16**]

Proverbs 14:34 [NIV] *“Righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a disgrace to any people.”*

Here we find the most searching test of national policies and achievement.

Uncompromising as this statement is, it is fully realistic.

“Exalts” Hebrew *“rûwm”* is **not** a material but a moral term here, as the second part of the Proverb shows.

Sin will always bring a person or nation reproach or disgrace and reproof from the Creator God.

Proverbs 14:35 [NIV] *“A king delights in a wise servant, but a shameful servant incurs his wrath.”*

This Proverb is a strong reminder **not** to blame lack or favouritism but our own shortcomings, for any lack of recognition. [**Proverbs 22:29**]

Any study of the things concerning the king, is to the thoughtful reader of the Proverbs, a study of things concerning Jesus Christ. The ideal elements speak about the character of Jesus Christ and the shortcomings in a person cry out for the mercy, compassion and teaching of Jesus Christ.

Proverbs 15:1 [NIV] *“A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger.”*

A right cause will be better pleaded with meekness rather than passion. Nothing stirs up anger like grievous words. [**Proverbs 15:18; Proverbs 25:15**] To turn away the wrath of a person is to seek reconciliation and peace. [**2 Corinthians 5:18-19; Hebrews 12:14; Matthew 5:9**]

Proverbs 15:2 [NIV] *“The tongue of the wise commends knowledge, but the mouth of the fool gushes folly.”*

The simple lesson of this Proverb: Is what comes out of our mouth considered or unconsidered words?

Is our conversation based on God’s Word, the Christian Bible, or is it just the result of random thoughts that we have generated?

The first, considered words, is of value to others, it is of quality if not quantity. The second may be of quantity but has little quality.

Proverbs 15:3 [NIV] *“The eyes of the LORD are everywhere, keeping watch on the wicked and the good.”*

Secret sins, services and sorrows are all clearly seen by our Creator God. This is of comfort to all who are seeking to live in harmony with the Creator God’s way of life. A way of unconditional love and personal sacrifice, as expressed in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

But such knowledge is terror to those who are rebelling against their Creator God and live a life of sin.

2 Chronicles 16:9 [NIV] *“The eyes of the Lord range throughout the earth to strengthen those whose hearts are fully committed to Him...”*

This scripture adds to the meaning of **Proverbs 15:3**, God is **not** just judging but is supporting all who are seeking to please Him.

Proverbs 15:4 [NIV] *“The tongue that brings healing is a tree of life, but a deceitful tongue crushes the spirit.”*

A tongue can heal a wounded conscience by telling of the compassion and forgiveness of the Creator God.

The tongue can reconcile parties at variance, or comfort those in physical or emotional pain.

The use of a healing tongue is wide and far reaching.

In total contrast a deceitful or lying tongue can bring great pain mentally to any person and destroy their zeal for life.

Proverbs 15:5 [NIV] *“A fool spurns his father’s discipline, but whoever heeds correction shows prudence.”*

This Proverb has an even greater impact if we spell “*father*” with a capital “*F*” referring to our heavenly Father’s discipline.

Hebrews 12:4-11 [NIV] *“In your struggle against sin, you have not yet resisted to the point of shedding your blood. And you have forgotten that word of encouragement that addresses you as sons: ‘My son, do not make light of the Lord’s discipline, and do not lose heart when he rebukes you, because the Lord disciplines those he loves, and he punishes everyone he accepts as a son.’ Endure hardship as discipline; God is treating you as sons. For what son is not disciplined by his father? If you are not disciplined (and everyone undergoes discipline), then you are illegitimate children and not true sons. Moreover, we have all had human fathers who disciplined us and we respected them for it. How much more should we submit to the Father of our spirits and live! Our fathers disciplined us for a little while as they thought best; but God disciplines us for our good, that we may share in his holiness. No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it.”*

For spiritual maturity and our future life in the Kingdom of God, discipline, that is course correction, is essential.

Proverbs 15:6 [NIV] *“The house of the righteous contains great treasure, but the income of the wicked brings them trouble.”*

This Proverb is asking the question, what are we storing up for our future life? For the Christian their treasure is **not** to be found in the present life. [**Matthew 6:19-21**]

It is more of a spiritual nature, understanding the real reason for human life and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. [**2 Corinthians 4:6-7**]

The wealth of worldly people increases their fears and suspicions [**Proverbs 13:8**] and adds to their fear of death and the loss of all that they have laboured for. [**Ecclesiastes 2:18-23**]

The work of the wicked not only brings trouble to themselves but also to others. Achar is an example of this sin of one man bringing trouble on many others. [**1 Chronicles 2:7; Joshua 7:1-26**]

Proverbs 15:7 [NIV] *“The lips of the wise spread knowledge; not so the hearts of fools.”*

This Proverb demands that we consider what we are spreading to other people who come in contact with us.

If we are careful of what we allow to influence our lives, the thoughts and facts we allow to enter our minds, we don’t have to be concerned with the influence we are having on other people we have contact with.

Matthew 6:33 [NIV] *“But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.”*

If seeking the righteous of our Creator God and a place in His Kingdom is first and foremost in our life we do **not** need to worry concerning what kind of light we are to the world. [Matthew 5:13-16]

The life of a foolish person, who believes that there is **no** Creator God [Psalms 14:1] will be spreading a false light to all who come in contact with them. Such people will face the wrath of God. [Romans 1:18-20]

[Please download our articles under the main heading 'The Delusion of Evolution' to study and I hope to accept, so as to avoid being among them who will face the wrath of God.]

Proverbs 15:8-9 [King James] *“The LORD detests the sacrifice of the wicked, but the prayer of the upright pleases him. The LORD detests the way of the wicked but he loves those who pursue righteousness.”*

The sacrifice of the wicked is a ritual prayer that has **no** humility and true love of the Creator as its foundation.

The Hebrew word translated “*abomination*” is “*tōēbāh*” meaning something that is disgusting and likened to pagan idolatry. Non true Christian religions, in their many forms, use repetitive phrases in their worship and prayers.

Matthew 6:7-8 [King James] *“And when you pray, do not keep on babbling like pagans, for they think they will be heard because of their many words. Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him.”*

Such prayers are **not** generated from the heart or mind of the person.

Ecclesiastes 5:1-2 [King James] *“Guard your steps when you go to the house of God. Go near to listen rather than to offer the sacrifice of fools, who do not know that they do wrong. Do not be quick with your mouth, do not be hasty in your heart to utter anything before God. God is in heaven and you are on earth, so let your words be few.”*

A few heartfelt words are far more acceptable to the Creator God.

The way the wicked, Hebrew “*rāshā*” morally wrong, actively ungodly, is a lifestyle that the Creator God hates because of how it will have to end, eternal death. So that it will never pollute other people in the future Kingdom of God, nor would such people feel at home with the righteous people in the Kingdom of God.

The word “*followth*” is the Hebrew word “*radaph*” means to run after, to put up a fight for, to hunt for.

A very intense verb, implying that it is such a strong and purposeful way of seeking His righteousness is what the Creator God loves.

Proverbs 15:10 [King James] *“Correction is grievous unto him that forsaketh the way: and he that hateth reproof shall die.”*

The person that hates correction will perish still in their sins, since they find physical pleasure in their sins and do **not** want to give them up.

To be unteachable is asking for eternal death.

It is those who need correction the most who are most impatient of it and who are in the greatest danger.

Proverbs 15:11 [King James] *“Hell and destruction are before the LORD: how much more then the hearts of the children of men?”*

Hell is Hebrew word “*sheôwl*” refers to the state of the dead **not** so much a place.

Ecclesiastes 12:7 [NIV] “*and the dust returns to the ground it came from, and the spirit returns to God who gave it.*”

The physical human body returns to dust from which it was made, while the human spirit [**Job 32:8**] will be reserved by God until the resurrection of the Christian dead and the transformation of the living Christians at Christ’s return.

[**1 Corinthians 15:12-23, 42**] This is when the human spirit of all Christians who have died will return to a new imperishable body.

[**Revelation 20:11-13**] This is when all who have never heard of Jesus Christ, will be resurrected and their human spirit once again placed into a human body.

Until this time all the human spirits of these people will be in the care of the Creator God.

“*Destruction*” is the Hebrew word “*ăbaddôwn*” meaning all who have wandered away or are perishing, that is the wasting away of human body.

These two words cover all of human life past, present and future.

The second part of this Proverb is expanded in **Psalms 139:1-16**, showing that **no** part of our life is unseen by our Creator God.

All the above is well beyond our finite mind’s ability to absorb.