

The Pathway to Eternal Wisdom

[Part 20]

Proverbs 18:1 [Amplified Bible] *“He who wilfully separates and estranges himself from God and man seeks his own desire and pretext to break out against all wise and sound judgement.”*

This is a description of a person who is boorishly irresponsibly and doggedly out of step with Godly Wisdom or God’s Word, the Christian Bible. This Proverb is a description of the fool mentioned in the next Proverb.

Proverbs 18:2 [NIV] *“A fool finds no pleasure in understanding but delights in airing his own opinions.”*

This person also has a closed mind to Godly Wisdom, but is very vocal in expressing their own opinion, even if it is **not** backed up with any solid facts only theories. [**Ecclesiastes 5:3**]

[Please download and study our articles under the main heading ‘*The Delusion Of Evolution*’.]

Proverbs 18:3 [New Jerusalem Bible] *“When wickedness comes, indignity comes too, and with contempt, dishonour.”*

Every sin has travelling companions. The Hebrew word which is translated “wickedness” is “*râsha*” which means everything that is morally wrong and ungodly.

Contempt for God’s Words was the first human sin [**Genesis 3:6**] and the final sin of humans. [**Daniel 12:2**]

Contempt was shown to those who had faith in Jesus Christ. [**John 9:34**] Read the whole account of this man’s experience.

Contempt was shown to Jesus Christ personally. [**Matthew 13:55-58**]

Proverbs 18:4 [NIV] *“The words of a man’s mouth are deep waters, but the fountain of wisdom is a bubbling brook.”*

The contrast between the words generated by human beings alone, “*deep*” Hebrew “*âmôq*” meaning profound human [**Job 32:8**] intelligence alone or strange. “*Waters*” Hebrew “*mayim*” referring to wasted water, urine or spilt semen, of only lost value.

In contrast Godly Wisdom is a flowing brook, Hebrew “*nachâlâh*”, from a root word meaning something inherited, not self-generated. “*Fountain*” Hebrew word “*mâqôr*” meaning the source of wisdom and progeny, the continual supply of words of wisdom.

Proverbs 18:5 [New Jerusalem Bible] *“It is not good to show partiality to the wicked and so to deprive the upright when giving judgement.”*

This is something I wish all judges and magistrates would consider when applying the misconceived “*human rights law*” that is enforced by the misguided rulers of the E.U.

The victim of crime seems to be considered far less than the “*rights*”, which should be called “*wrongs*” of the criminal.

Such conduct of human judges is condemned by the Creator God, and will only cause the criminal to repeat their acts of violence. [**Psalms 82:2-3; Deuteronomy 24:17; Isaiah 56:1**]

Please download and study our article 'Ancient Israel's Legal System' listed under heading 'Judgement']

Proverbs 18:6-7 [NIV] *“A fool’s lips bring him strife, and his mouth invites a beating. A fool’s mouth is his undoing, and his lips are a snare to his soul.”*

Some people talk themselves into trouble.

This is one more Proverb encouraging us to take full control over the words we speak. Few words in many cases are better than many. We should always remember that God created us with the ability to think that is far faster than we can speak. Also we have two ears and only one mouth!

Proverbs 18:8 [NIV] *“The words of a gossip are like choice morsels; they go down to a man’s inmost parts.”*

This Proverb is exactly repeated in **Proverbs 26:22** showing just how important it is. It is hard **not** to listen to gossip, it is like turning down a delicious dessert. The trouble is that just taking one morsel creates a taste for more.

You can resist rumours the same way a determined dieter resists chocolates, never open the box.

Remember that the root cause of gossip is envy. [**Leviticus 19:16; 1 Timothy 5:13; 1 Peter 4:15**]

Romans 1:28-32 [NIV] *“Furthermore, since they did not think it worth while to retain the knowledge of God, he gave them over to a depraved mind, to do what ought not to be done. They have become filled with every kind of wickedness, evil, greed and depravity. They are full of envy, murder, strife, deceit and malice. They are gossips, slanderers, God-haters, insolent, arrogant and boastful; they invent ways of doing evil; they disobey their parents; they are senseless, faithless, heartless, ruthless. Although they know God’s righteous decree that those who do such things deserve death, they not only continue to do these very things but also approve of those who practise them.”*

Gossips are listed among those who do **not** know the Creator God and who will be judged harshly by the Creator God.

2 Corinthians 12:20 [NIV] *“For I am afraid that when I come I may not find you as I want you to be, and you may not find me as you want me to be. I fear that there may be quarrelling, jealousy, outbursts of anger, factions, slander, gossip, arrogance and disorder.”*

Gossip was one of the problems in the church in Corinth that Paul was to correct in a stern manner.

Credibility destroyed by false gossip is very difficult to reverse.

Proverbs 18:9 [King James] *“He also that is slothful in his work is brother to him that is a great waster.”*

The Hebrew word translated “waster” is “*shâchath*” meaning decay, to corrupt, spoil.

In one way what is being corrupting or in decay is the character of the lazy person. Work is one of the ways that character can be built because of the personal discipline that is involved. Also the lazy show a lack of interest in the welfare of other human beings. [**Amos 6:3-6; Luke 15:11-13; Luke 16:1**]

Proverbs 18:10-11 [NIV] *“The name of the LORD is a strong tower; the righteous run to it and are safe. The wealth of the rich is their fortified city; they imagine it an unscalable wall.”*

The world thinks that the unseen is the unreal, when the very opposite is true, everything that is physical is finite while the unseen spirit world is infinite.

In scripture the name of a person is very important for it brings with it the quality of the person, this is why God changed the names of some people to parallel with the job of work He wanted them to do for Him.

The name of the Creator God is all important in our personal relationship with Him.

Exodus 3:14 [King James] *“And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM: and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you.”*

“I am that I am” meaning He is self-existent, no dependence on any other being. Being self-existent also means He is self-sufficient, and therefore all sufficient with the inexhaustible fountain of being. This also means He is eternal and unchangeable. He will be what He will be. This also means that He will be totally faithful to His Promises.

This is one way in which the name of God is a strong tower.

[For further explanation of this subject please download and study our article *‘The Importance Of A Name In Scripture’* under heading *‘Names’*]

In total contrast the rich person who is looking to their wealth to be *“strong city”* is dependent on something that will **not** last, is finite. [**Luke 12:15-21**] This is why such confidence is just part of their imagination, a deceitful fantasy generated out of their own conceit.

Proverbs 18:12 [NIV] *“Before his downfall a man’s heart is proud, but humility comes before honour.”*

Pride can be very dangerous both physically and even more dangerous spiritually, and we have many warnings in scripture to avoid pride. [**Isaiah 5:21; Romans 12:16; 2 Samuel 22:28; Zephaniah 3:11; 1 John 2:16; Revelation 3:17**]

Proverbs 18:13, 15, 17 [King James] *“He that answereth a matter before he heareth it, it is folly and shame unto him.” ... “The heart of the prudent getteth knowledge; and the ear of the wise seeketh knowledge.” ... “He that is first in his own cause seemeth just; but his neighbour cometh and searcheth him.”*

In these three statements there are three basic principles for making sound decisions and judgements.

- a) Get all the facts before answering. Listen before we come to any decision. [**v13**]
- b) Be open to new ideas or original circumstances, this can only come by not rushing into a conclusion or decision. [**v15**]
- c) Make sure we hear both sides of the story from all who witnessed the problem, or from others who have used a product. [**v17**]

All three principles centre around seeking additional information.

This may sound like hard work, but any other course will involve prejudice or a bad decision.

Eagerness, with self-conceit, will expose us to shame. [**v13**]

We must obtain knowledge in our heads by study of God’s Words of Wisdom but also in our hearts, that is changing the way we are motivated to live. [**v15**]

It is wisdom to listen to others, even our enemies, for in that way we will get understanding of our own motivations.

John 7:51 [NIV] *“Does our law condemn a man without first hearing him to find out what he is doing?”*

This is the basis of any just judgement.

Proverbs 18:14 [King James] *“The spirit of a man will sustain his infirmity; but a wounded spirit who can bear?”*

Firmness of mind supports us when under many pains and trials. But when the conscience is troubled with remorse no human help can ease the pain, only the love, compassion and mercy of our Creator God. [**1 Thessalonians 5:23**]

Proverbs 18:16 [NIV] *“A gift opens the way for the giver and ushers him into the presence of the great.”*

“When does a gift become a bribe?”

There is an article on this website, under main heading ‘Bribes’ that covers the verse in full. The simple answer is just one word, *“motivation.”*

Proverbs 18:18 [NIV] *“Casting the lot settles disputes and keeps strong opponents apart.”*

The conviction that the decision of the lot was a divine course, in the Old Testament, was more effective in ending disputes than endless arguments, often producing only bitterness.

Christians who live in the age of the gift of the Holy Spirit to all who obey [**Acts 5:32**] may similarly be united when a decision on a disputed course of action has been prayerfully achieved. [**Acts 13:1-3; Acts 1:23-26**. This is the last record of lot being used in the New Testament. It was just before the coming of the Holy Spirit. [**Acts 2:1**] From then onwards the Holy Spirit guided the New Testament church as Jesus Christ had promised. [**John 16:13**]

Proverbs 18:19 [NIV] *“An offended brother is more unyielding than a fortified city, and disputes are like the barred gates of a citadel.”*

Great care must be taken to prevent quarrels among relations and those under obligations to each other.

Mark 9:42 [King James] *“And whosoever shall offend one of these little ones that believe in me, it is better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he were cast into the sea.”*

This is very important in our relationship with a new believer. Any contentions can lead to a situation in which there is **no** way out of the situation.

Such contentions can be the end product of something that offends another family member, secular or spiritual.

Proverbs 18:20-21 [King James] *“A man’s belly shall be satisfied with the fruit of his mouth; and with the increase of his lips shall he be filled. Death and life are in the power of the tongue: and they that love it shall eat the fruit thereof.”*

The word belly is symbolic of the heart or mind, that is the centre of our being. What we fill our mind with, and as a result what comes out of our mouths in words will decide our future. [**Matthew 12:37**] The end *“fruit”* of our lives. If these words are many and uncontrolled we could well be in big trouble.

Matthew 12:37 [King James] *“For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned.”*

This is what **Proverbs 18:21** is talking about, eternal life or eternal death.

Words are powerful and can be deadly.

Proverbs 18:22 [King James] *“Whoso findeth a wife findeth a good thing, and obtaineth favour of the LORD.”*

A good wife can be a great blessing for a man and is a token of divine favour.

The key word is “good” for a wife can be more of a liability than a blessing.

Job 2:7-10 [King James] *“So went Satan forth from the presence of the LORD, and smote Job with sore boils from the sole of his foot unto his crown. And he took him a potsherd to scrape himself withal; and he sat down among the ashes. Then said his wife unto him, Dost thou still retain thine integrity? curse God, and die. But he said unto her, Thou speakest as one of the foolish women speaketh. What? shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil? In all this did not Job sin with his lips.”*

Job’s wife was **not** a consoling help to him in his trial. [**Proverbs 19:13; Proverbs 27:15; Proverbs 21:9, 19**]

Proverbs 8:35 suggests that after wisdom itself, the best of God’s blessings in a good wife.

Proverbs 31:10-31 gives us the perfect goal that every wife should aim for.

This Proverb states it is good to be married, which is true physically and spiritually. Today’s emphasis on individual freedom, even within marriage, is misguided.

Ephesians 5:21 [NIV] *“Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ.”*

This is the key to a good marriage, that both husband and wife **must** apply to this very intimate relationship.

The more detailed account of how both husband and wife can do this is found in next few verses, [**Ephesians 5:22-33**].

Proverbs 18:23 [King James] *“The poor useth intreaties; but the rich answereth roughly.”*

This is a statement of the harsh reality of the world that we live in, where there is **no** fear of the Creator God.

James 2:1-4 [NIV] *“I My brothers, as believers in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ, don’t show favouritism. Suppose a man comes into your meeting wearing a gold ring and fine clothes, and a poor man in shabby clothes also comes in. If you show special attention to the man wearing fine clothes and say, ‘Here’s a good seat for you,’ but say to the poor man, ‘You stand there’ or ‘Sit on the floor by my feet,’ have you not discriminated among yourselves and become judges with evil thoughts?”*

Here the reality of normal human relationships is being discussed in the light of Christian faith and conduct. Partiality and class distinctions is rife in every nation.

James 2:5-9 [NIV] *“Listen, my dear brothers: Has not God chosen those who are poor in the eyes of the world to be rich in faith and to inherit the kingdom he promised those who love him? But you have insulted the poor. Is it not the rich who are exploiting you? Are they not the ones who are dragging you into court? Are they not the ones who are slandering the noble name of him to whom you belong? If you really keep the royal law found in Scripture, ‘Love your neighbour as yourself,’ you are doing right. But if you show favouritism, you sin and are convicted by the law as law-breakers.”*

God looks past the façade of position and wealth into the mind and human spirit where the real character and value of a human life is to be found. [**Jeremiah 17:10**]

Proverbs 18:24 [Amplified Bible] *“The man of many friends [a friend of all the world] will prove himself to be a bad friend, but there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother.”*

We all need friends who will be close, listen, care and offer help when it is needed, in good times or bad. It is better to have one such friend than dozens of superficial acquaintances. Instead of wishing you could find such a true friend, seek to become one to others. There are people who need your true friendship in a world that has many lonely people.