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A Wise Woman Builds Up Her Home

14: 1-7

A proverb is a short and memorable saying designed to be our blueprint for living in the world that ADONAI has created. It is important to note that proverbs are not promises; they are generally true principles, all other things being equal.



A wise woman builds up her home (to see link click [Dz](#) - Wisdom for Women), but a foolish one tears it down with her own hands (14:1 CJB). The proverb contrasts wise and foolish women. The intention of this observation is to warn young men (the implied reader of these proverbs) from associating and marrying foolish women. The contrast between wise and foolish women runs throughout the book (especially Chapter 5-7) and constitutes one of its most important teachings. After all, there is no more important decision that a young man has to make than his lifelong partner.²⁷⁵

Family can be a great blessing. But one look at the trends in modern society would convince anyone that family is a source of deep pain for many. Divorce rates, spousal and child abuse, sexual abuse, adultery (see the commentary on

Deuteronomy Br - Do Not Commit Adultery) raising children in daycare centers, lack of education of our children, and many other trends reveal a deep and abiding wound on our society. No wonder **Malachi** says the following in describing the coming of the forerunner of **the Messiah**. **“He will turn the hearts of the fathers to the children and the hearts of the children to the fathers; otherwise I will come and strike the land with complete destruction” (Malachi 4:6).**

The relationship of children to **parents** is a vital indicator of family health. **Solomon** speaks of **a son** who **mistreats his father and evicts his mother (19:26)**. Judging from the fact that **the son** is said to have the ability to **evict his mother**, this is probably an adult child. Extended families often live together in the ancient world, and the bond between adult children and their **parents** was much closer than in most similar relationships today. **The son** also said to mistreat **his father**. The description is of a child who uses his adult strength to reject both **father** and **mother**. One would expect **the proverb** to read that such a child is cursed, doomed, or an abomination. Instead, **Solomon** says this adult child is a shame to **his parents**. The shame perhaps results from a failure in child raising. Understanding that there are always exceptions, generally that adult child who rejects **parents** was not well nurtured in a home of love, respect, and sound moral education.

The relationship between **husband** and **wife** is also addressed in **the wisdom of Proverbs**. Some aspects of spousal problems are not covered, such as violence. In the Torah, any injury done to another was punishable by having the same injury inflicted upon the offender (**Leviticus 24:19-20**). Adultery is an obvious exception to this rule. But there are more commonplace and everyday marital problems than abuse and adultery.

Some of the more common problems are detachment of **the father**, arguing between spouses, and general disharmony. **It’s better [for a man] to live on the corner of a roof than to share the house with a nagging wife (25:24 Hebrew)**. The word translated **nagging** is *medon*, a general adjective meaning *quarrelsome*. Quarrels and **nagging** are the way people attempt to address different problems. But there are two types of quarrelsome people; those who have something legitimate to quarrel about and those who would quarrel about anything. Thus, the disharmony that would cause **a man** to think about living on **the corner of his roof** may simply reflect a problem with **his wife**, but more likely a larger problem in **the home**.

The detached **father** is a common problem. **Like a bird that strays from its nest is a man who strays from his home (27:8 ESV)**. Some men do, in fact, leave, via divorce. Many **women** are left to raise **their** children alone. Other fathers stay physically but leave in spirit, becoming detached and distant. The hopes, joys, and fears of **the wife** and children mean little to them. But whatever the dysfunction is in a home, be it poor child raising, marital conflicts, bitter arguments, abuse, neglect, or infidelity, a tremendous blessing is being forfeited. Some dysfunction is minor and can be overlooked. But these smaller problems are equally serious, because they may become major problems later on.²⁷⁶ It is vitally important to deal with **anger** and conflict in a timely manner, rather than letting it fester and potentially lead to sin. The Bible teaches: **Don't let the sun go down while you are still angry and do not give the devil a foothold (Ephesians 4:26-27)**. We all look forward to **the Rapture** (see the commentary on [Revelation By - The Rapture of the Church](#)) and the Second Coming. **The rabbis taught that before the Messiah came, Elijah would return to herald His coming and to prepare Isra'el for the Messianic Kingdom**. The last verses of **Malachi** read: **Look, I will send to you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and terrible Day of ADONAI. He will turn the hearts of the fathers to the children and the hearts of the children to their fathers; otherwise I will come and strike the land with complete destruction (Malachi 4:4-6 CJB)**.

Whoever fears ADONAI walks uprightly, but those who go on the wrong path despise Him (14:2 Hebrew). The fear of **ADONAI** is a basic concept in **the book of Proverbs (1:7, 9:10, 10:27, 31:30)**. From these passages, we see that there is an intimate connection between one's basic religious attitude (**fear of ADONAI**), ethics (walking honorably) and **wisdom**. **Walking uprightly** indicates a moral lifestyle. The verb **walks** implies **a path** that becomes explicit in the second colon. As typical in the part of **Proverbs**, the second colon creates a contrasting parallelism. The word **upright** in colon 1 can have the meaning of *straight*, so the opposite would be to wander off **the path**, taking a crooked route. **Those** that take **the wrong path**, implying unethical behavior, show that **they despise ADONAI**.

From the mouth of the foolish is a branch (Hebrew: *choter*) producing pride; but the lips of the wise shall preserve them (14:3 Hebrew). **The word branch is found only in Isaiah 11:1, where it signifies a new branch growing from the trunk of a tree. If the word rod was intended, as a symbol of punishment, another Hebrew word, *shebet*, would have been more appropriate. It is better, therefore, to translate: a branch producing**

pride. From the fool's mouth produces haughty speech which has the effect of getting him into trouble. The speech of a fool reveals what is in **his** heart; thus, **pride** is revealed in **his speech**. But, while **the speech of fools** leads to **their** downfall, the words of **the wise** can keep **them** out of trouble. It is important to remember that **proverbs** are not promises; **they** are generally true principles, all other things being equal.

Without oxen a stable stays clean, but you need a strong ox for a large harvest (14:4 NLT). The meaning of this verse is that a productive life is messy. One desires a neat and tidy life, just as the ideal **stable** would be **clean**. However, a clean stable by the nature of things would mean an empty **stable** since **oxen** don't have to be in **a stable** very long before **it's** messy. But without **oxen** there is no productivity. After all, as colon 2 points out, **a large harvest** doesn't appear magically out of thin air, but rather as a result of much work.

A truthful witness does not lie, but a false witness proclaims lies (14:5 WEB). As in **12:17**, the primary setting seems to be a court scene, but the observation has implications beyond this. That statement is simple enough. Who **lies? False**, not truthful **witnesses**. The verb proclaims (Hebrew: *pauch*) means more specifically *a blow* or *a blast*. To use an archaicism, the meaning can be clearly expressed by the word *broadcasts*. **The liar** broadcasts **his lies**, and is therefore, not subtle. There are a number of proverbs concerning **the witness (19:28, 21:28, 24:28-29, 25:7c-8 and 18, 29:24, etc).**

A mocker searches for wisdom and finds none, but knowledge comes easily to the discerning (14:6 NIV). **Solomon** doesn't tell us how **mockers search for wisdom**. But since **they** remain **mockers**, **they** must be doing it on **their** own terms. **Mockers** reject advice and correction of mistakes (**12:2**). **They** are **proud (6:16-19)** and certainly don't have **the fear of ADONAI**. If **they** search for **wisdom** on these terms, no wonder **they** are left empty in the process. On the other hand, **the discerning** are open to correction, display humility, and **fear ADONAI**. Again, it is no wonder that **knowledge** comes easily and quickly to **them**. Therefore, this **proverb** teaches that one's ability to learn is related to one's spiritual attitude.

Stay away from a fool, you won't find knowledge on his lips (14:7 NLT). In **13:20** we learn that those who associate with **fools** will become **foolish themselves**, and those who associate with **wise people** will be **wise**, all things being equal. **Walk with the wise and become wise, but the companion of**

fools will suffer harm. The idea is that one who searches for knowledge will not find it with **a fool**, so don't associate with such **a one**.²⁷⁷

Dear heavenly **Father**, praise **You** that **You** are not like so many earthly fathers who detach themselves from their family. **You** have so kindly promised to come and to live within those who obey in **You**. **Yeshua answered and said to him: If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word. My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our dwelling with him (John 14:23).** Mere head knowledge of **You** is not enough, **Your** children need to have a vital relationship with **You**. Going to church is very good (**Hebrews 10:25**) but more important than that is to go to **You** in prayer and obey **Your Word**. **Pride** is like **a branch** growing from the mouths of **fools**. Who **the branch** is connected to, is what gives **the branch its** life. Being connected to **Yeshua** is being connected to true heavenly life and joy; but where there is no connection - there is no life. **If anyone does not abide in Me, he is thrown away like a branch and is dried up. Such branches are picked up and thrown into the fire and burned (John 14:6).** You are also holy and pure and will not allow anyone who is full of their own selfish **pride**, living to please themselves as their first love, to enter into your holy heaven. **He who trusts in the Son has eternal life. He who does not obey the Son will not see life, but the wrath of God remains on him (John 3:36).** In **Messiah Yeshua's** holy Name and power of **His** resurrection. Amen