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There is a Way that Appears Right

14: 8-14

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.



The prudent (1:4a) understand where they are going (14:8a NLT). This verse introduces the unit on deception by contrasting **the wisdom of the prudent** with **the foolishness of fools** who deceive **themselves** and others.²⁷⁸ The first colon informs us that if we want to know how to live our lives, and stay on **the straight path (1:15)**, then **wisdom** is the answer. **The prudent man does not walk on blindly but carefully notes the various paths before him and deliberately chooses the one he believes to be right. But fools deceive themselves (14:8b NLT).** The opposite of the wisdom of **the prudent** is the stupidity of **fools**. **Not possessing the wisdom of the prudent, and urged on by foolishness, the fools deceive themselves and stray from the right path.** In what way is the stupidity of **fools** a fraud. The answer is probably evident by comparing the second colon to the first. **Folly** may hold out the promise to be the solution to **life's** issues; but in reality, **folly** fails people and is therefore a fraud. Rather than guiding people on **the straight path**, it misleads them (**11:1, 12:5, 17, and 20, 14:8 and 25, 20:23, 26:24**).²⁷⁹

Fools make fun of guilt (Hebrew: *asham*), **but the godly acknowledge it and seek reconciliation (14:9 NLT)**. This is a rare, but not exceptional reference to **the Guilt Offering** (see the commentary **Leviticus, to see link click [Am - The Guilt Offering: Evidence of Repentance](#)**). It indicates an obligation to discharge **their guilt** by means of an atoning sacrifice. According to **Jeremiah 51:5**, *asham* will bring punishment when **Messiah** returns (for example, see **[Jeremiah Fe - Judgment Against Babylon](#)**). And according to **Psalm 68:21**, those who continue in **their *asham*** will certainly perish. **Fools** are those who disdain **Guilt Offerings**. After all, **fools** will not admit **their guilt**; and therefore, would never agree that a **Guilt Offering** is necessary. Today, our **guilt** is atoned for by the sacrifice of **Messiah**, who offered **His life as a guilt offering (Isaiah 53:10)**.²⁸⁰

Verse 14:10-14 is a loose cluster of **proverbs** around the twin concepts of the heart and the idea of retribution. **The heart** is linked with **joy** in **verses 10** and **13**, while retribution is clearly stated in **verse 11**. **Verse 14** draws the two together with the description of the **faithless in heart** and the mention of **a good man and faithless** receiving appropriate consequences.²⁸¹

Each heart knows its own bitterness, and no one else can fully share its joy (14:10 CJB). The **proverb** makes the observation that no one can really know what is going on emotionally inside another person. It looks at this from the opposing perspectives of **bitterness** and **joy**, a merism, representing the full range of emotion. This can be clearly seen in **Hannah's** prayer to the compassionate **High Priest** (see the commentary on **[the Life of King Sha'ul Aj - Hannah's Prayer](#)**), who knows us better than we know ourselves (**First Kings 8:38; John 14:16-17; Hebrews 4:15-16**).

The house of the wicked will be destroyed, but the tent of the upright will flourish (14:11 CJB). **The house, inhabited by the wicked, is a substantial building where they can afford to erect and occupy on their dishonest gains; but the upright, who adhere to honesty, live in a humble tent. Yet the former will be destroyed and the latter will flourish**. Paradoxically, **the wicked's house** is less secure than **the upright's tent** because it is built on sand (see the commentary on **[The Life of Christ Dy - The Wise and Foolish Builders](#)**). **The house** connotes more security and splendor than **a tent**, as seen in **David's** desire to replace **the Tabernacle** with **a House**, in other words, **the Temple (Second Samuel 7:4-6)**.

There is a path that seems right to a man, but it ends in death (14:12

Hebrew). The image is that of a journey, in which the traveler imagines that he is pursuing a right path that will lead him to his desired goal or success and happiness, but finds, too late, that it leads to an early death, that is, to the destruction of happiness. This proverb is the heart of the subunit warning **the young man** not to walk by sight, and pointedly gives the reason. The safety and destiny of a **path** are not always as they appear (**Matthew 7:13-14**). The deceptive **path** leads as certainly to **death** as the plainly marked one. Only an all-knowing, all-powerful **God** knows the true **path** that leads to **life**, and we must accept that revelation by faith.²⁸²

Even in laughter the heart can be sad, and joy may end in sorrow (14:13 CJB). This verse is repeated in **16:25**. **A day which begins with bright sunshine may grow cloudy, so it is with the happiness of man because this life is full of uncertainty.** This exceptionally pessimistic proverb must be interpreted in light of the book's dominant optimism that the expectation of **the righteous** is **joy (10:28)**, **life (10:16-17, 11:19, 13:12 and 14)**, and a future **hope (23:17-18)**, in contrast to **the wicked**, who have none (**24:19-20**). **Yeshua** said: **In this world you will have trouble (John 16:33b)**, as this **proverb** affirms and as experience validates. But the positive statement of the next **proverb** protects this one from being misunderstood as being totally pessimistic. **The faithless will receive what they have earned**, or eternal death, **and the good will be rewarded for their faithfulness**, or eternal **life (14:14 Hebrew)**. In spite of the present heartache and the grief that follows joy in this **life**, we must press on in **faith**, fully expecting **ADONAI** to reward **the good** and to punish **the faithless** (see the commentary on **Revelation Fo - The Great White Throne Judgment**).

*Dear awesome heavenly **Father**, I am so full of joy and peace to have **You** as my **Father**! Praise **You** for being so full of love, mercy and holy righteousness. **Your love, ADONAI, is in the heavens, Your faithfulness up to the skies (Psalm 36:5)**. **You** are not a soft cushy father; but rather the Almighty King of Kings and Lord of Lords. **On His robe and on His thigh He has a name written, "King of kings, and Lord of lords" (Revelation 19:16)**. **Your wisdom** is so extremely vast and infinite! **You** are all-knowing. There are many voices in this world that cry out that they are **the right path** to take, or that each may choose **the path** of their own making; but that is pure **folly**. The **wise** do not walk on blindly; but carefully discerns the various **paths** and **wisely** selects **the path** that has proof for an eternal life of joy and peace. True and lasting joy in life can only be found by following your **path**. **I have come that they might have life, and have it***



abundantly (John 10:10c)! Your path, though it may lead to pain and suffering now on earth, is still the wisest choice. Life on this earth will be over in a blink and life afterwards will be full of glory and continue forever. **For I consider the sufferings of this present time not worthy to be compared with the coming glory to be revealed to us (Romans 8:18).** In **Messiah Yeshua's** holy name and power of **His** resurrection. Amen