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God, through His Son Jesus, provides eternal grace for our failures and human limitations.

Proverbs 18.

(2015)

The Bible not only reveals God's eternal plans purposes and promises

But also shows how you can know God for yourself.

Teach it, don't demand it.

Although I believe my aim is pure and God's will perfect this document is still the product of a human man. As to such I neither claim special knowledge or perfect understanding.

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Proverbs 18.

Topics.

- This chapter is full of a variety of various Proverbs.

FOR INFORMATION: concerning people, places and the meaning of words see the title: "Map Locations and People of the Bible," and the title: "Bible Dictionary" on Website Menu.

INTRODUCTION: Proverbs is a collection of Israelite wisdom literature, that has multiple authors, but most of it is attributed to King Solomon. Chapter one to nine gives readers a framework for understanding the rest of the book. The central concern of the book of Proverbs is practical wisdom for living. We are told that the beginning and essence of wisdom is the fear of the LORD (Prov. 1:7) (Prov. 9:10). It contrasts the benefits of seeking wisdom and the pitfalls of living a foolish life. While the wicked stumble in deep darkness (Prov. 4:19), the path of the righteous is like the light of dawn, which shines brighter and brighter until full day ((Prov. 4:18). Individual proverbs date from between the tenth and sixth centuries B.C.

Kings and angels: the title king is often used throughout the book of Proverbs, it comes from the Hebrew word (*malak*) which can refer to the following four things: -

1. A royal king ascending to the throne of royalty and reigning from it.
2. A male sovereign (i.e., a man or boy who rules as a monarch over an independent state.
3. The chief, or the principal leader or ruler of a group (secular or religious).
4. A messenger or ambassador, especially of God, (i.e. an angel, a king, a prophet, a priest or a teacher).
5. The best, the strongest and the wisest of all.

It is interesting to notice in the first verse of proverbs (Prov. 1:1) the word king comes from the Hebrew word (*malak*) and the first mention of an angel in the Bible also comes from the Hebrew word (*malak*) (Gen. 16:7). This means when the title king is used in the book of Proverbs it carries the idea of a wise king that does good unless the context implies otherwise. For further information concerning angels see the title: "Angels," (ON WEBSITE MENU).

Proverbs 18

Proverbs 18:1 ----- ¹Whoever isolates himself seeks his own desire; he breaks out against all sound judgment.

The King James Bible says: -

- Through desire a man, having separated himself, seeketh and intermeddleth with all wisdom.

Following are two possible interpretations of this verse: -

1. It goes against all wisdom for a person to isolate themselves from others.
2. A person is so craving something that they do not want to hear anyone say that they should not do it so they refuse to listen to advice and counsel, but it goes against all wisdom to do so.

Proverbs 18:2 ----- ²A fool takes no pleasure in understanding, but only in expressing his opinion.

People who lack good sense are not interested in trying to find the truth of a matter their only interest, is to express their opinion. This principal also applies in general conversations in that there are people who take no pleasure in listening to the opinions and conversation of the one they are talking to, but only interested in expressing their own opinion.

These people are easily recognised because immediately after the person they are speaking with finish their sentence, they instantly begin speaking without giving any thought or showing any interest in what the person they are talking with has just said.

Proverbs 18:3 ----- ³When wickedness comes, contempt comes also, and with dishonor comes disgrace.

People look at those who do wrong with an attitude and feeling of utter disgust and dislike and consider them to be worthless and undeserving of respect.

Proverbs 18:4 ----- ⁴The words of a man's mouth are deep waters; the fountain of wisdom (wellspring in KJV) is a bubbling brook (flowing brook in the KJV).

The words of a man's mouth are as deep waters: the second half of this verse shows that the man in focus is a wise man.

Deep waters: carries the idea that such a wise person is not only full of deep wisdom, but also full of the deep mysteries of God and His grace and as such is a never ending source of teachings that brings life and wisdom to others.

The fountain of wisdom is a bubbling brook: carries the idea that their heart is not only like a never ending fountain of wisdom that is continually pouring forth wise and good counsel that is never exhausted, but are also full of refreshing speeches like the pure waters of a babbling brook and of spiritual wisdom and knowledge that ministers grace to the hearers that springs up within them to eternal life and everlasting happiness in glory.

Proverbs 18:5 ----- ⁵It is not good to be partial to the wicked or to deprive the righteous of justice.

The words, "it is not good," do not express what a great offence this is to God, other Proverbs that express the same thing use the word "abomination." This is because to pervert and twist justice to show favour to those that do wrong and cheat those that do what is good and right from what is rightfully there is a great sin before God. Justice is one of the great pillars of God's throne so to pervert it for one's own gain and advantage is a repugnant and abominable sin before the great and Almighty Judge of all mankind.

Proverbs 18:6 ----- ⁶A fool's lips walk into a fight, and his mouth invites a beating.

The words and speech of those who lack good sense stir the temper of others up in anger so much so that they attack them in violence. Such people are called fools because they do not have the wisdom to calm the temper of an angry person down with a soft and quiet word or know when to back away from an argument, before it erupts into violence.

Proverbs 18:7 ----- ⁷A fool's mouth is his ruin, and his lips are a snare to his soul.

This verse can be seen as a continuation of the previous verse in that those who cannot control their anger are spoken of as being fools. This is because tongues that are uncontrolled speak words of contention which leads to quarrels, arguments verbal abuse and physical violence. These can lead to lawsuits, heavy fines and jail which bring great hurt to a family and in some cases total ruin and mental suffering for the one who cannot control their anger.

A fools lips are a snare to his soul: Proverbs chapter twelve says, "An evil man is ensnared by the transgression of his lips," (Prov. 12:13) which shows that a fool in this context embrace those who are wicked and corrupt.

Their speech is a snare to their soul, because rather than listen to the good counsel and advice of others they verbally defend themselves or verbally attack those who attempt to counsel them and in their talkativeness, boasting and long-windedness says things that should not be said and are therefore condemned by them;

In Matthews and James letters it is written: -

- The good person out of his good treasure brings forth good, and the evil person out of his evil treasure brings forth evil. (Matt. 12:35).
- The tongue is a fire, a world of unrighteousness. The tongue is set among our members, staining the whole body, setting on fire the entire course of life, and set on fire by hell. (James 3:6).

It is in this way a fool's mouth, brings ruin to their lives in this world and is a snare to their soul for the world to come.

Proverbs 18:8 -----⁸The words of a whisperer are like delicious morsels; they go down into the inner parts of the body.

The King James Bible says: -

- The words of a talebearer are as wounds, and they go down into the innermost parts of the belly.

The following verses show that the belly refers to the mind and the heart and the spirit which collectively are the innermost being of human nature.

- The spirit of man is the lamp of the LORD, searching all his innermost parts of the belly. ²⁸Steadfast love and faithfulness preserve the king, and by steadfast love his throne is upheld. ²⁹The glory of young men is their strength, but the splendour of old men is their gray hair. ³⁰Blows that wound cleanse away evil; strokes make clean the innermost parts of the belly. (Proverbs 20:27-30) (See KJV)
- I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint; my heart is like wax; it is melted within my breast (the midst of my bowels in KJV). (Psalm 22:14).

Proverbs verse eight describes the eagerness with which people gladly swallow in tales and rumours and gossip of scandal and slander which find their way to the innermost being of the mind and heart. They are like tasty foods that are eagerly swallowed, and go down into the innermost parts of the belly, meaning they are treasured up in the deepest recesses of the heart and mind, to be remembered and spoken of again whenever there is an opportunity for sharing them. These tales and gossip of scandal and slander not only cause deep wounds in those who such malicious rumours are spread about, but also wound their reputation.

There are talebearers and gossipers who pretend to be affected and grieved for the failings and infirmities of those they are secretly exposing in their gossip, but are in reality not only secretly rejoicing, but also enjoying telling the tale. Tales and rumours and gossip of scandal and slander though perhaps pleasing at first to tell and hear are wounds that injure the person who receives them and those who they are spoken of, because they go down into the innermost parts of the mind and sink deep into the heart of those who hear them and of those who they are told and there they remain.

Proverbs 18:9 -----⁹Whoever is slack in his work is a brother to him who destroys.

A lazy person and a person who destroys are counted as being alike in that even though they take different paths they both come to one end which is extreme want and poverty. Concerning a person who is slack, slothful and lazy the apostle Paul in his letter wrote, "Stay away from any brother who is lazy (2 Thess. 3:6) and actually commands us to stay away. Added to this he gives us another command not even to give them food (2 Thess. 3:10).

Showing that God does not expect brothers and sisters in Christ to burden their own families by giving financial aid or food to a brother who is lazy and for no good reason is unwilling to work. Upon saying that it should be mentioned that this command does not apply to a person who is out of work, but is willing to work, nor does this principal apply to a person who for whatever reason is going through a period of overwhelming sorrow, deep depression or some other crisis in their life and because of these does not want to work.

Those in Christ suffering in any of these ways, is in desperate need of encouragement, comfort and compassion. This is because laziness is about attitude and choosing not to work when one is fully able to work and not about being unable to work. Though it is true that those who help the poor are storing up treasure in heaven God does not expect anyone to help a person who is unwilling to help themselves for the following three reasons: -

1. The monies most brothers and sisters can afford to give is very limited so it is better that their giving goes to those who desire to work, but for whatever reason cannot and are therefore poor and struggling through no fault of their own rather than to those who are choosing to be lazy and unwilling to work when they are fully able.
2. Those who are lazy and chose not to work for no-good reason will forever be a drain on the budget of others and the church.
3. When those who do desire to work, but for some reason are unable to work do overcome their troubles they in turn will work and give to others who lack.

In Proverbs chapter twenty-one it is written: -

- The desire of the sluggard kills him, for his hands refuse to labour.” (Prov. 21:25).

Proverbs 18:10 ----- ¹⁰The name of the LORD is a strong tower; the righteous man runs into it and is safe.

To a Hebrew man and woman a person's name embraces everything that the person stands for which means that the expression, "A godly person runs into the name of the LORD" embraces the following two aspects:-

1. Everything the LORD stands for, mercy, forgiveness, righteousness love and doing what is right and good to others etc.
2. Resting in God's name knowing the LORD loves them and is in control of their lives for salvation and eternity.

God's eternal power, love, mercy and grace made known in and through the Lord Jesus Christ forms a strong eternal tower for the faithful who trusts in Jesus who will never leave or forsake them in contrast to the deceitful tower of the rich who trust in their riches and treasure which will pass away. The tower of the rich (who trust in their riches and not God) is a strong city and a high wall in this mortal world, but it will fail most miserably when they most in need it, which of course is when death is calling, since all the treasure this world has cannot by eternal life.

A man wisely said, "I have never seen a Hurst transporting the coffin of a corpse with a trailer attached and full of the deceased person's material possessions." I myself live in a downstairs unit. When the man above me died, a tip truck was backed up to the balcony of his upstairs unit and all the possessions were thrown into the tray of the truck most of the items smashing into little pieces as they hit the steel floor of the tray. These broken and worthless pieces were then taken to the smelly fires of the rubbish dump. These two simple examples clearly show the vanity of labouring and building our entire life solely on the temporary riches and things of this world and giving no thought or time to God.

NOTE: this does not mean it is wrong for Christians to be rich and wealthy, there are many men and women who have been very successful in their particular line of work, they do all their business deals honestly and with integrity and treat their staff justly and because of their success they have resources that are able to help

others extend the Kingdom of God and help the poor. The focus of this verse is on those who give God no place in their heart, mind and thoughts and instead build their life upon their success, upon what they achieve and upon what they possess and put all their trust in their riches and wealth and use it for their own selfish indulgences. Money is not sinful or evil it can be used for good or for bad, to help the poor or to corrupt a king. It is the purpose it is used for that determines whether the money is good or bad, not the money itself.

Proverbs 18:11 ----- ¹¹A rich man's wealth is his strong city, and like a high wall in his imagination.

The expression, "A rich man's wealth is his strong city," carries the idea that wealth gives the rich power and security in this world since they can buy whatever they need and pay for the best home anywhere in the world, the best car, the best schooling for their children and the world's best medical doctors and surgeons that money can buy.

The expression, "Wealth is like a high wall in their imagination," means that money consumes their mind and is their dominate thought. They constantly think upon money, how to make more, how not to loose what they have, what they can buy, the power and esteem it gives them etc. It means they see their wealth as their protection which for many it is in this world, but when death comes knocking and they are standing at the grave with no hope of eternal life all the riches they have suddenly become worthless.

Proverbs 18:12 ----- ¹²Before destruction a man's heart is haughty, but humility comes before honour.

Those who are so high-minded that they exalt themselves above others and look down upon those they consider as less with contempt is a sign of their impending ruin and destruction since their haughty, arrogant and prideful spirit will sooner or later be humbled by some distressing situation or circumstance that they have no control over. This is especially true when they reach old age and youthful strength and vitality is gone and death is waiting to consume them.

The expression, "Humility comes before honour," is especially true concerning eternal salvation; no one can come to God without firstly humbling themselves before Him, repenting and acknowledging their sin and by faith trusting in His plan of salvation. Those who humble themselves in this manner are not only exalted before the throne of God and all the angels in heaven, but are also granted the gift of eternal life.

Proverbs 18:13 ----- ¹³If one gives an answer before he hears, it is his folly and shame.

To cut someone off from their speech and give an answer before all the facts are heard is not only foolishness and rude, but also manifests a spirit of self-importance and self-conceit and exposes those who act in such a foolish way to shame.

Proverbs 18:14 ----- ¹⁴A man's spirit will endure sickness, but a crushed spirit who can bear?

It is easier to cope with a sickness or illness than an extremely saddened or depressed spirit. This truth is proven true by the reality that it is very rare someone suicides over sickness, but multitudes suicide because of despair, depression or because of a sad heart.

Proverbs 18:15 ----- ¹⁵An intelligent heart acquires knowledge, and the ear of the wise seeks knowledge.

An intelligent and wise man or woman will be constantly acquiring knowledge that has the potential to enhance their life. This may also carry the idea that the knowledge that is acquired must, also affect the heart so that it becomes outwardly practised in life through our speech, behaviour and actions.

Proverbs 18:16 ----- ¹⁶A man's gift makes room for him and brings him before the great.

A person who has a gift or talent does not need to manipulate their way into a position, the gift will open doors of its own accord.

A good example of this would be a singer who has a brilliant voice all they have to do is sing and their gift will open doors for them. Likewise a preacher who is skilled in oratory and speech making does not need to manipulate his way to the pulpit, but rather preach whenever able and the gift will make room for him to minister to the congregations.

Proverbs 18:17 ----- ¹⁷The one who states his case first seems right, until the other comes and examines him.

Human nature is such that it will always tell a story in such a way that it makes self-look good so as to win the favour of the listener and turn them against the other person, but there are always two sides to a story, that is why it is so important not to make a judgment until both parties have been questioned. This is why court rooms have a lawyer to defend and a lawyer to prosecute. It is commonly known amongst lawyers concerning married couples involved in a divorce that the age old saying, "There are two sides to a story," is not always true, since in cases of divorce there are actually three sides, his, hers and the truth.

Proverbs 18:18 ----- ¹⁸The lot puts an end to quarrels and decides between powerful contenders.

Lot: comes from the Hebrew word (*gowral*) and literally means to be rough (as stone), in the context of this verse it refers to a stone or pebble, that is thrown to determine a decision by the way it is going to land. In some circumstances the easy way to decide a thing or stop a quarrel is to flip a coin, because casting a lot puts an end to quarrels Following are three examples: -

1. When my building partner and I decided to go our own way we had to divide the tools, we were good mates and did not want to upset each another so we prayed that God's will would be done and then grouped the tools together in pairs of equal value. We wrote our names on opposite sides of a block of wood and tossed it in the air and agreed that whoever's name came up would have the first choice then we would alternate choosing from then on, it worked really well and stopped any tension that could have developed. In casting lots God's will was done because we both agreed to accept the outcome whatever way the block fell and both accepted the outcome of it as God's will.
2. In the book of Acts those in the upper room agreed that there were two men who could equally replace Judas so either way the lot fell would have been OK.
3. If Paul and Peter were deciding to share the Good News of the Gospel on a particular Sunday at the same house meeting they could pray and flip a coin to see which one of them was to lead the meeting in that home and by faith whatever way the lot fell it could be accepted as God's will since no matter whether the coin fell in favour of Peter or Paul the outcome is a good result for those attending the meeting and for God's Kingdom.

In all three examples whatever way the lot fell was not only a good outcome, but also agreed by all involved that whatever it determined would be accepted. No-one with any wisdom would cast a lot if one man was be perfectly suited for the position or the work and another was not nor would they cast a lot if one of the outcomes had the potential to do harm, bring ruin or cause division. In these types of scenarios no one needs to cast a lot to make the right decision since the choice would be obvious to all. Casting lots is only in God's will when whatever way the lot falls is a good outcome. When the lot is cast according to this principal its every decision can be accepted as being from the LORD. (Proverbs 16:33)

Proverbs 18:19 ----- ¹⁹A brother offended is more unyielding than a strong city, and quarrelling (contentions in KJV) is like the bars of a castle.

Brother in this verse comes from the Hebrew word (*'ach*) and literally means brother, but also carries the idea of belonging to the same race, kin or family and by extension a friend.

When the emotions and feelings of a brother or friend are deeply offended and hurt, by the one they love, to restore the relationship back to the warmth it once had is so enormously difficult, because of the contentions, the offence and the deep hurt that the Psalmist here says it would be easier to have a, strong city

surrender. This is because contentions and quarrelling result in resentments, bitterness, anger and hurt which all separate people from each other like steel bars or solid walls, that cannot not be penetrated. Those who have been deeply hurt (especially if it has been many times) consciously or unconsciously slowly build solid spiritual walls around their heart so that no one can penetrate through the walls to get near the heart to hurt it again. Quarrelling, arguing and contentions will only strengthen these walls since such things simply increase the hurt. The only way to break such walls down is by forgiveness and patient and enduring love.

Proverbs 18:20 ----- ²⁰From the fruit of a man's mouth his stomach is satisfied; he is satisfied by the yield of his lips.

Everything begins by spoken words even God spoke words to create. If no-one speaks nothing is done, it is by words of wisdom and what a person says that they find work, prosper and are satisfied. Men and women may be full of wise words and wise choices and good decisions, but until they are spoken and acted upon they have no power to accomplish anything.

Proverbs 18:21 ----- ²¹Death and life are in the power of the tongue, and those who love it will eat its fruits.

This verse can be applied to life in this mortal world and eternal life: -

1. **Life in this mortal world:** by words people can encourage, comfort and uplift others or pull down, hurt and even destroy a person. Those who love life will speak words of encouragement and comfort, while those who hate life will gossip and speak words that destroy. Life encompasses joy, happiness, vitality, contentment and excitement etc., while death embraces hatred, depression and despair. If a person chooses to speak words of life they will enjoy its fruits, but if words of destruction are chosen the fruits of death will follow.
2. **Eternal life:** death and life are in the power of the tongue the following verses show that the path to eternal life begins by confessing the Lord Jesus Christ and the path to eternal death is by denying Christ, clearly showing that life and death are in the power of speech.
 - With the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved. (Rom. 10:10).
 - No one who denies the Son has the Father. Whoever confesses the Son has the Father also. (1 John 2:23).
 - By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God. (1 John 4:2).
 - Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God. (1 John 4:15).

Proverbs 18:22 ----- ²²He who finds a wife finds a good thing and obtains favour from the LORD.

A good wife here embraces a wife who is loyal and faithful to God and the Lord Jesus Christ and to her husband and is a good mother to her children. She is industrious (in contrast to being slothful and lazy), a helper and an encourager to her husband and good natured, loving, kind, compassionate and forgiving not only to her own family, but also toward all her neighbours.

Such a wife is a great blessing to a man and a blessing of God's favour. It is certain that the testimony of those who find such a wife is that they could find no greater treasure on earth she is truly a blessing of the LORD.

The teaching of the Catholic Church that denies marriage to their priests is certainly not a biblical teaching. The following Scriptures of the Bibles clearly show that it is a good thing for a Christian man to have a wife.

- The LORD God said, "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him." (Gen. 2:18).

- An excellent wife who can find? She is far more precious than jewels. (Proverbs 31:10).
- House and wealth are inherited from fathers, but a prudent wife is from the LORD. (Proverbs 19:14).

Proverbs 18:23 ----- ²³The poor use entreaties, but the rich answer roughly.

The poor uses desperate pleas and serious and passionate requests, whereas the rich don't need to worry about being gentle or even polite.

Proverbs 18:24 ----- ²⁴A man of many companions may come to ruin, but there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother.

This is a common testimony of the rich and famous, they are aware that they have their money friends or fame friends then there are their real friends who stay with them when their money fails or their fame fades.

The truest friend of all the faithful is the Lord Jesus Christ, rich, poor, troubled, flawed he will never forsake those who trust and love him. Jesus said: -

- Greater love has no one than this, that someone lays down his life for his friends. (John 15:13).

All who trust and love Jesus are his friends, he didn't just lay his live down for them he laid it down to a most brutal, bloody and cruel death that no one would perish, but all who come to him would be granted eternal life and everlasting happiness in glory.

Wisdom embraces the following nine aspects: -

1. Having a clear thoughtful, rational, discerning, discriminating, sharp, and discreet mind.
2. Being cautious in character as opposed to being impulsive.
3. Being sensible and practical with the skills and talents that a person has.
4. Making choices that considers others and that will be fair and just.
5. Studying, reading and learning to acquire mental knowledge that helps in making right decisions for the present moment and for the future.
6. Being able to see the future danger of a decision, choice or action.
7. Having the ability to make good choices and decisions in the present moment that will end in the best result and a good outcome in the future.
8. Being able to perceive the end result or ramifications (good or bad) of the underlying message a speaker is teaching.
9. Wisdom will protect a person from making decisions and choices in the present moment that will lead to hurt or calamity in the future for themselves and for others.

End.