

MISHLĚ/PROVERBS 18

Shalom,

In this article I will break down **MishlĚ/Proverbs 18** verse by verse and reveal some great nuggets of truth by looking at some key Hebrew words, as well as cross referencing these verses with other relevant verses throughout the Scriptures, in order to help us understand these wisdom filled proverbs in a better way. This is in no way an exhaustive commentary on this proverb, but is simply a continual study on it, with the hope of opening it up before the reader for further study and meditation. Many of the words discussed herein are also discussed in our commentaries of the other proverbs, and the reason for this is not to simply duplicate teachings but to rather give the reader adequate access to that which will further their ability to study the key words contained herein without having to necessarily go and seek the same key words in other commentaries, and therefore this commentary can be used as a stand-alone study for the relevant proverb, while at the same time have the advantage of seeing the various themes and lessons that are clearly repeated collectively throughout the great wisdom of these Proverbs of Shelomoh!

Before we go into each verse I simply want to remind the reader of what the term ‘**proverbs**’ means.

The Hebrew word for ‘**proverbs**’ is the noun מִשְׁלָּה **mashal** – **Strong’s H4912** and means, ‘**a proverb, parable, a byword**’ which in its primitive root form means, ‘**to compare, to represent, be like**’, and comes from the root verb מִשַּׁל **mashal** – **Strong’s H4911** which means, ‘**to use a proverb, speak in parables or sentences of poetry**’. That is why we understand the words of Messiah when He spoke in parables by using terms such as, “**The reign of the heavens is like...**”, or, “**The reign of the heavens shall be compared to...**”

A ‘**parable**’ actually presents the truth very clearly by putting a fresh light on the matter, as it is often presented in a ‘**story**’ format that represents the message being given, using imagery known to the hearer, in order to illustrate and shed light on the result of past, current and even future events as determined by choices that are made.

The most common theme seen throughout the parables of this **MishlĚ/Proverbs 18** is on the proper use of one’s speech and we are able to see from these sayings how wisdom instructs us on moral virtues and their contrary vices, along with the consequences of good and bad decisions. While there are many references to ‘the tongue’ or one’s speech in all of the Proverbs of Shelomoh, we take note that **MishlĚ/Proverbs 12** and **18** gives more mention the speech of one’s lips than the others. The references to one’s speech are best understood when cross referenced with other verses in Scripture in order to gain a fuller understanding of the power of the words that proceed from our mouths. The gift of speech is often taken for granted and is often abused when mouths are not guarded when the words of our mouths are to be pleasing to Elohim and bring esteem to His Name! Let us take a closer look at this collection of parables that teach us to be on guard against pride, folly and foolish lips.

Verse 1:

“The separatist seeks his own desire; he breaks out against all sound wisdom.”

In this first verse of **MishlĚ/Proverbs 18** we are given a clear warning against being a separatist! What is a separatist? Simply put: A separatist is one who favours separatism, and is an advocate for independence, and an advocate for racial and cultural separation. The separatist refuses to walk in fellowship and in unity with the body and seeks to do whatever is right in his own eyes!

The Hebrew word for ‘**separatist**’ is פָּרָד **parad** – **Strong’s H6504** which means, ‘**to divide, disperse, separate, scatter, make a division**’. Those who refuse to submit to the Word and walk in unity with the body and refuse to submit to the appointed leadership of Elohim cause division and strife, and there reasonings do not line up with sound wisdom! But for the straight, sound wisdom is kept readily available by Elohim!

The Greek word used in the **LXX** (Septuagint – Greek translation of the Tanak – O.T.) for ‘**separatist**’ is χωρίζω **chōrizō** – **Strong’s G5563** which means, ‘**to divide, separate, depart, put asunder, to separate one’s self from, to leave a husband or a wife, divorce**’, and comes from the word χωρίς **chōris** – **Strong’s G5565** which means, ‘**without, beside, independent, separate, apart**’. χωρίζω **chōrizō** – **Strong’s G5563** is used in:

Romiyim/Romans 8:35 “**Who shall separate us from the love of the Messiah? Shall pressure, or distress, or persecution, or scarcity of food, or nakedness, or danger, or sword?**”

Nothing at all should separate us from the love of Messiah, and here in this parable Shelomoh makes it clear that anyone who does separate themselves do so due to their own selfish desires and shows that they are not seeking the desire of Elohim which is our apartness! The desire of Elohim is not separation, as in walking in complete independence and apart from Him and proper fellowship in His body but rather His desire is our set-apartness, which is completely different!

Tas’loniqim Aleph/1 Thessalonians 4:3-5 “**For this is the desire of Elohim: your set-apartness! – that you should abstain from whoring, 4 that each one of you should know how to possess his own vessel in set-apartness and respect, 5 not in passion of lust, like the gentiles who do not know Elohim**”

Set-apartness/apartness in the Greek is ἁγιασμός *hagiasmos* – Strong’s G38 – ‘*consecration, sanctifying*’, and the noun is the word ἅγιος *hagios* – Strong’s G40. To ‘consecrate’ means ‘*to make or declare to be set-apart and be devoted to a purpose with the deepest irrevocable dedication*’.

Without set-apartness no man shall see Elohim, as we see written in:

Ib’rim/Hebrews 12:14 “**Pursue peace with all, and pursue apartness without which no one shall see the Master.**”

The term ‘set-apartness’ in Hebrew is from the word קִדְּשׁ *qodesh* – Strong’s H6944 – and it means ‘*apartness, consecrated, dedicated, that which is dedicated and separated unto יהוה*’. The word is really self-explanatory and carries with it great weight in its identification of truly setting something or someone apart from another with a clear distinction of being marked as separate and apart from the rest.

Why I am mentioning this is to simply highlight the clear difference between one who seeks the desire of Elohim, which is set-apartness, versus the one who is seeking his own desire and separates himself from being properly set-apart!

We are called to come out and be separate, but we are not called to be a separatist who seeks his own desire!

Qorintiyim Bēt/2 Corinthians 6:17-18 “**Therefore, “Come out from among them and be separate, says יהוה, and do not touch what is unclean, and I shall receive you. 18 And I shall be a Father to you, and you shall be sons and daughters to Me, says יהוה the Almighty.”**

The Greek word that is translated here as ‘be separate’ is ἀφορίζω *aphorizō* – Strong’s G873 which means, ‘*to mark off by boundaries, ostracise, separate, set-apart*’, and comes from the two words: 1 - ἀπό *apo* – Strong’s G575 which is a preposition and primitive particle, meaning, ‘*from, away from, against*’; and 2 - ὁρίζω *horizon* – Strong’s G3724 which means, ‘*predetermined, fixed, appointed, to mark off by boundaries*’.

We as we are called to come out and be separated, marked by the clear boundaries of the Torah of Elohim that is now written upon our hearts, in which we delight and meditate upon day and night in order that we prosper in all we do, staying in the Master with great joy!

What I like about these two verses in the second letter to the Corinthians is the promise that is given to those who respond correctly to the call of coming out and being separate. The promise is that יהוה says that He will be a Father to us and we shall be sons and daughters to Him. This is a powerful text that we find here in Sha’ul’s letter, which highlights for us further Scriptural proof that יהוה and יהושע are ONE!!! Why I say that is because we find these very similar words in:

Ḥazon/Revelation 21:6-7 “**And He said to me, “It is done! I am the ‘Aleph’ and the ‘Taw’, the Beginning and the End. To the one who thirsts I shall give of the fountain of the water of life without payment. 7 “The one who overcomes shall inherit all this, and I shall be his Elohim and he shall be My son.”**

What is clear here in this text from **Ḥazon/Revelation** is that it is יהושע Messiah that is speaking, as we take note that in **Ḥazon/Revelation 1:8, 11, 17 & 18** that a clear revelation that יהושע Messiah is the Aleph and Taw, the beginning and the end, the first and the last, the living one who became dead and is living forever!

Yeshayahu/Isaiah 44:6 “**Thus said יהוה, Sovereign of Yisra’el, and his Redeemer, יהוה of hosts, ‘I am the First and I am the Last, besides Me there is no Elohim.’**”

The One who gives the Living Water is our Master and Elohim, יהושע Messiah!

Yoḥanan/John 4:10 “**יהושע answered and said to her, “If you knew the gift of Elohim, and who it is who says to you, ‘Give Me to drink,’ you would have asked Him, and He would have given you living water.”**”

Yoḥanan/John 4:14 “**יהושע answered and said to her, “Everyone drinking of this water shall thirst again, 14 but whoever drinks of the water I give him shall certainly never thirst. And the water that I give him shall become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life.”**”

To the one who overcomes and responds correctly to the call to come out and be separate, יהושע Messiah will be their Elohim and they shall be His son! Yeshayahu confirms this when he tells us that the One who shall be born unto us shall be called ‘Father of continuity’, or as some translations say, ‘Everlasting Father’:

Yeshayahu/Isaiah 9:6 “**For a Child shall be born unto us, a Son shall be given unto us, and the rule is on His shoulder. And His Name is called Wonder, Counsellor, Strong Ėl, Father of Continuity, Prince of Peace.”**”

The main reason I have mentioned these verses is simply because there are many who have separated themselves away from the Truth over this matter of the ‘oneness’ of Elohim, and do so as they seek their own desire and break out against all sound wisdom that Scripture clearly reveals and teaches us! We have seen some who deny that יהושע Messiah is Master and Elohim separate themselves and isolate themselves away from proper fellowship and end up seeking their own desires and refuse to walk in unity with the body of Messiah, claiming that they can ‘do it alone’! The separatist is completely different to the one who has come out and is separate, as the one who comes out and is separate is marked by the clear instructions and boundaries of the Torah, while the separatist is not and does whatever is right in his own eyes, even assuming that he is right despite breaking out against sound wisdom, which is found in the company of the wise!

The separatist seeks his own desire! This is the mark of the separatist versus the one who is set-apart and is separate from worldly ways and the lusts of the flesh.

The Hebrew word translated as ‘seeks’ is שָׁקַח *baqash* – Strong’s H1245 which means, *‘to seek, aim, search, look, inquire’*, and it is written in the ‘piel’ form which expresses an intensive or intentional action and could therefore be expressed as, *‘seek earnestly or seek the face, seek to find, demand, desire, ask’*, and this kind of ‘seeking’ is an intense seeking with a purpose! This word is used in:

Tehillah/Psalm 105:5 “**Seek יהוה and His strength; seek His face always.**”

Now I just want to make it clear that יהוה is by no means lost in any way – it is us who were lost through sin and lawlessness and so we earnestly seek Him while He is to be found, as we seek to please Him and walk in His Truth.

Tsephanyah/Zephaniah 2:3 “**Seek יהוה, all you meek ones of the earth, who have done His right-ruling. Seek righteousness, seek meekness, if so be that you are hidden in the day of wrath of יהוה.**”

True set-apart believers seek יהוה always, while a separatist seeks his own desire. What one seeks will reveal whether they are a separatist or one who has come out and is separate!

The Hebrew word used here for ‘desire’ is תַּאֲוָה *taavah* – Strong’s H8378 meaning, *‘a desire, longing, craving, lusting, intense greed’*. This word can have a positive as well as a negative meaning, as it can emphasise that deep longing and craving for something according to the flesh that should not be desired as well as the deep desire for that which satisfies and nourishes!

Tehillah/Psalm 21:1-2 “**The sovereign rejoices in Your strength, O יהוה; and how greatly he exults in Your deliverance! 2 You have given him the desire of his heart, and You have not withheld the request of his lips. Selah.**”

Tehillah/Psalm 38:9 “**יהוה, all my desire is before You; and my sighing has not been hid from You.**”

When the Yisra’ēlites lusted after meat in the wilderness יהוה brought them what they desired and it did not turn out well!

Tehillah/Psalm 78:29-31 “**So they ate and were completely satisfied, for He brought them what they desired. 30 They had not turned away from their desire, their food was still in their mouths, 31 when the wrath of Elohim came against them, and He slew among their fat ones, and He struck down the choice ones of Yisra’ēl.**”

The separatist who seeks his own desire break out against all sound wisdom! The Hebrew root word used for ‘breaks out’ is גָּלַע *gala* – Strong’s H1566 which means, *‘exposed, laid bare; to disclose oneself, break out (in contention)’*. In other words his false seeking is exposed as it does not line up with sound wisdom! Sha’ul tells us in:

Eph’siyim/Ephesians 5:15-17 “**See then that you walk exactly, not as unwise, but as wise, 16 redeeming the time, because the days are wicked. 17 So then do not be foolish, but understand what the desire of יהוה is.**”

The Hebrew root word that is translated as ‘sound wisdom’ is תְּשׁוּבָה *tushiyyah* – Strong’s H8454 which means, *‘sound and efficient wisdom, abiding success, deliverance, helpful insight’*. Those who refuse to submit to walking in the Torah of Elohim lack sound wisdom! We are told in:

Mishlē/Proverbs 8:14 “**Counsel is mine, and sound wisdom; I am understanding, mightiness is mine.**”

After having stated what יהוה hates we see how Shelomoh makes clear the truth of what true wisdom declares! Sound wisdom and counsel is יהוה’s and can only come from יהוה. Anyone who seeks their own desire breaks out against the clear wisdom of the Word of Elohim!

What Shelomoh teaches us here is that the one who lives alone is selfish and self-indulgent and shows contempt for those who walk in unity and have sound judgement! There is no place in the body of Messiah for ‘lone rangers’, and what is sad to see today is how many who have come out of the church system have become separatists and refuse to submit to walking in fellowship with others and be accountable to others, as they reckon that they can do it alone, thus they break out against all sound wisdom as their attempt at walking as wise is simply exposed through the mirror of the word as being foolish!

What better way to start this **Mishlē/Proverbs 18!!!** This certainly sets the scene for the wise parables that follow, highlighting for us those who are separatist versus those who have truly ‘come out and are separate’!

Verse 2:

“A fool does not delight in understanding, but in uncovering his own heart.”

The Hebrew word used here for ‘fool’ is כְּסִיל *kesil* – Strong’s H3684 which means, *‘fool, stupid fellow, dullard (which is a stupid and unimaginative person)’*, and comes from the root verb כָּסַל *kasal* – Strong’s H3688 which means, *‘to be or become stupid, foolish’*.

יהוה takes NO Pleasure in fools!!!

Qoheleth/Ecclesiastes 5:4 “When you make a vow to Elohim, do not delay to pay it, for He takes no pleasure in fools. Pay that which you have vowed.”

יהוה takes NO Pleasure in fools!!! The word here for ‘pleasure’ is הַפֶּהֶץ *haphets* – Strong’s H2654 and means, ‘to delight in, desire, take pleasure in’; and clearly יהוה does not delight in the fool and his ways – but who then does He take pleasure in...:

Tehillah/Psalm 147:11 “יהוה takes pleasure in those who fear Him, in those who wait for His kindness.”

This word הַפֶּהֶץ *haphets* – Strong’s H2654 is the Hebrew word used here in this parable of Shelomoh and is translated as ‘delight’! The Hebrew word for ‘no/not’ is לֹא *lo* – Strong’s H3808 which is the adverb that means, ‘not, no, never, neither’. The Hebrew word for ‘understanding’ is תְּבוּנָה *tebunah* – Strong’s H8394 which means, ‘understanding, discernment, reasonings, discretion, skill, intelligence’, and comes from the root word בִּין *bin* – Strong’s H995 meaning, ‘to discern, act wisely, consider carefully, understand, perceive’.

Mishlë/Proverbs 3:5 “Trust in יהוה with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding”.

We are to trust יהוה with all our heart, which entails trusting Him with all of the understanding and wisdom that is contained in His Word and not seek out our own vain and selfish reasonings. When our hearts and minds are filled with His Word and we meditate daily on His Torah, then our speech and actions will line up with the true plumb-line of His Word, enabling us to walk straight!

A fool does not delight in understanding! A fool does not delight or take pleasure in understanding Scripture and carefully considering what the Word teaches as it is often too much work to do! We have always said that true understanding is gained by the ‘doing’ of the Word, for then the actual applying of the Word to one’s daily life brings proper discretion and ability to discern right from wrong, while those who do not delight in understanding have no inclination to study, meditate and walk in the Torah, which uncovers their heart for who they truly are! While we cannot see the heart of others, as it is only יהוה who sees the heart, we learn from this parable that the heart of a fool is uncovered and laid bare before all by not delighting in understanding and not walking according to the Word. In other words the fool may even be a hearer of the Word but is not a doer and so deceives himself into thinking that he is wise, yet his inability to delight in understanding through the doing of the Word reveals that he is simply a fool!

A fool has no desire to learn or understand what the Word says and would rather give their own opinions, which reveal their folly when measured up against the clear wisdom of the Truth!

By this definition we are able to recognise that there are many fools around as most have no desire or inclination to learn and study the Torah and Word of Elohim, yet they will all have their own opinions of what it says. The blessing of the wise that delight in the Truth is clear:

Tehillah/Psalm 1:1-2 “Blessed is the man who shall not walk in the counsel of the wrong, and shall not stand in the path of sinners, and shall not sit in the seat of scoffers, 2 but his delight is in the Torah of יהוה, and he meditates in His Torah day and night. 3 For he shall be as a tree planted by the rivers of water, that yields its fruit in its season, and whose leaf does not wither, and whatever he does prospers.”

Verse 3:

“When a wrong one comes, scorn comes too. And with shame comes reproach.”

The Hebrew root word used here for ‘wrong one’ or ‘the wicked’ is רָשָׁע *rasha* – Strong’s H7563 which means, ‘wicked, criminal, evil, offender’. רָשָׁע *rasha* is frequently placed in Scripture, especially in **Mishlë/Proverbs**, as being in direct and unequivocal opposition to צַדִּיק *tsaddiq* – Strong’s H6662 which means, ‘just, righteous, blameless, lawful’.

It is from this contrast that we are able to get the clearest profile of the רָשָׁע *rasha* – Strong’s H7563 (wicked) kind of people! The book of **Mishlë/Proverbs** contains a great deal of antithetical parallelism, which contrasts the רָשָׁע *rasha* and the צַדִּיק *tsaddiq* in black and white terms. The focus is on both the quality of lifestyle and the results of these two ways of living. Whereas the wicked forsake יהוה, the righteous cling to him. Though the wicked are oppressive and dishonest, the righteous are upright and lovers of truth, etc.

Debarim/Deuteronomy 28 clearly deals with the blessings for the righteous (verses 2-14) and the curses for the wrong (verses 15-68)!

The Hebrew word used for ‘scorn’ here is בִּזָּה *buz* – Strong’s H936 which means, ‘to despise, scorn, hold in contempt, hold as insignificant’. The ‘cause and effect’ of wickedness is scorn and contempt; that is to say that what follows wickedness or the wicked man is contempt. The English word ‘contempt’ is described in the Merriam Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary as: **The act of despising; the state of mind of one who despises; lack of respect and reverence for something, as well as: willful disobedience to or open disrespect of a court, judge, or legislative body.**

The English word 'scorn' is defined as: **an open dislike and disrespect or derision often mixed with indignation; an expression of contempt or derision.**

One translation renders the first part of this verse a "Doing evil brings contempt"! With wickedness there is always contempt for it comes together, and the second line of this parable renders... **"And with shame comes reproach"**.

The Hebrew root translated as 'shame' is from the root word קָלוֹן qalon – Strong's H7036 which means, **'dishonour, disgrace, shame, reproach'**. The Hebrew word translated as 'reproach' is from the root word הִרְפָּה herpah – Strong's H2781 which means, **'a reproach, contempt, disgrace'**, which comes from the root verb הִרְפָּה haraph – Strong's H2778 which means, **'reproach, defies, despise, insult, scorn'**, which is used in:

Tehillah/Psalm 74:18 "Remember this: the enemy has reproached יהוה, and a foolish people has despised Your Name."

Both of these Hebrew words that are used here for 'shame' and 'reproach' carry similar meaning and this basically states that with dishonour there is disgrace or vice versa. In this context 'shame' refers to the **'loss of honour'** that one suffers due to a dishonourable action that is done. **'Reproach'** can also be understood as **'disgrace'** and expresses the disapproving thoughts and words of others toward the person.

In **Habaquq/Habakkuk 2** we see some severe woes given to a people who had turned the esteem of יהוה into shame.

The fate of wickedness and depravity is that the fools who are wicked shall be filled with 'shame' instead of esteem!

Habaquq/Habakkuk 2:16 "You shall be filled with shame instead of esteem. Drink, you too, and be exposed as uncircumcised! The cup of the right hand of יהוה shall come around to you, and great shame upon your esteem."

We are told in:

Mishlê/Proverbs 3:35 "The wise do inherit esteem, but fools are bearing away shame!"

In a Psalm that echoes a continual praise for the Torah, commands, statutes and witnesses of Elohim Dawid asks that reproach and scorn be removed from him as he has observed the witnesses of Elohim:

Tehillah/Psalm 119:22 "Remove from me reproach and scorn, for I have observed Your witnesses."

The word used here for 'remove' is גָּלַל galal – Strong's H1556 and means, **'roll, roll away, commit, trust'**. 'Galal', in essence, means to roll some object on, upon, away, in, against, from, together, unto, or down. This figure is used for rolling oneself on יהוה and so therefore means to completely trust יהוה, or to commit one's behavior or life to יהוה, or remove such non-material things as reproach and contempt. To commit to יהוה takes a **'rolling away'** of those things that have held us back from walking fully and confidently committed in Him. A derivative of this word is **Gilgal**, which is the place where Yehoshua circumcised Yisra'el after entering the Promised Land as יהוה **'rolled away the reproach of Mitsrayim'** from Yisra'el and they were separated unto יהוה. By the Blood of Messiah we too have had the reproach of Mitsrayim **'rolled away'** in order that we may be separated unto יהוה as a set-apart people walking in the Light of His Torah!

The Hebrew word translated here in **Tehillah/Psalm 119:22** as 'observed' is נָצַר natsar – Strong's H5341 meaning, **'to keep watch, guard, preserve'** and a derivative of this word is the נֶצֶר netser – Strong's H5342 meaning, **'Branch, a sprout, descendant'** which is used as a reference to Messiah:

Yeshayahu/Isaiah 11:1 "And a Rod shall come forth from the stump of Yishai, and a Sprout from his roots shall bear fruit."

As 'branches' of THE VINE, we are 'watched over' by יהוה, and equipped to bear much fruit:

Yoħanan/John 15:4 "Stay in Me, and I stay in you. As the branch is unable to bear fruit of itself, unless it stays in the vine, so neither you, unless you stay in Me."

Being **'watched over'** must cause us to **'watch over'** and **'observe'** that which we have been entrusted with, and that is His Torah that He has written upon our hearts!

Verse 4:

"The words of a man's mouth are deep waters; the fountain of wisdom is a flowing stream."

This parable teaches us the clear lesson of how our words reflect a lot of what is going on deep inside our beings. To the religious Pharisees who accused Messiah of casting demons out by Be'elzebul when He healed a demon-possessed man who was dumb and blind, He said the following:

Mattithyahu/Matthew 12:34-37 "Brood of adders! How are you able to speak what is good – being wicked? For the mouth speaks from the overflow of the heart. 35 "The good man brings forth what is good from the good treasures of his heart, and the wicked man brings forth what is wicked from the wicked treasure. 36 "And I say to you that for every idle word men speak, they shall give an account of it in the day of judgment. 37 "For by your words you shall be declared righteous, and by your words you shall be declared unrighteous."

Messiah was highlighting how the wicked words of the Pharisees had come from deep within their beings, revealing the wickedness that was upon their hearts.

The Hebrew word that is translated as 'deep' is עֲמוֹק amok – Strong's H6013 which means, **'deep, exceedingly mysterious'**.

This adjective is used 17 times on the Tanak, 7 of which are found in Wayyiqra/Leviticus 13 in reference to the severity of leprosy, and in the Proverbs of Shelomoh we see this adjective being used 4 times. Here in **Mishlĕ/Proverbs 18:4** it is used to highlight the depths that the words of a man's mouth come out from. In **Mishlĕ/Proverbs 20:5** we are told that counsel of a man's heart is like deep waters, but a man of understanding draws it out. In **Mishlĕ/Proverbs 22:14** we are clearly warned that the mouth of the strange woman is a deep pit and in **Mishlĕ/Proverbs 23:27** we are told that the whore is a deep pit. What we are therefore able to recognise is the inward being of a man is reflected by his words.

Sha'ul reminds us that our words must be pure and clean, reflecting a heart that is pure and clean as we let the Word of Messiah dwell in us:

Qolasim/Colossians 3:16-17 **“Let the Word of Messiah dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing with pleasure in your hearts to the Master in psalms and songs of praise and spiritual songs. 17 And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the Name of the Master יהושע, giving thanks to Elohim the Father through Him.”**

The Greek word translated here as ‘dwell’ is ἐνοικέω enoikeō – Strong’s G1774 which means, *‘to dwell in’*, and metaphorically it carries the meaning, *‘to dwell in one and influence him (for good)’*.

When the Word of Messiah dwells richly in us we are enabled to walk according to the Spirit and put to death the things of the flesh, giving us great depths of knowledge, discernment and understanding from deep within which will also cause our speech and actions to be pure and clean!

Romiyim/Romans 8:10-14 **“And if Messiah is in you, the body is truly dead on account of sin, but the Spirit is life on account of righteousness. 11 And if the Spirit of Him who raised יהושע from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Messiah from the dead shall also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit dwelling in you. 12 So then, brothers, we are not debtors to the flesh, to live according to the flesh. 13 For if you live according to the flesh, you are going to die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you shall live. 14 For as many as are led by the Spirit of Elohim, these are sons of Elohim.”**

Qolasim/Colossians 4:6 **“Let your word always be with favour, seasoned with salt, so that you know how you ought to answer each one.”**

Knowing that the words of a man are deep waters, we recognise what must dwell in us in order that good comes forth from our mouths from the good treasures that is in our hearts. Dawid tells us in:

Tehillah/Psalm 119:11 **“I have treasured up Your word in my heart, that I might not sin against You.”**

When the Word of our Master and Elohim is treasured up in our hearts we are equipped to guard against sinning and speaking wickedness!

When the good treasure of His Word dwells in us, His Word becomes a fountain of living waters!

Yoĥanan/John 7:37-38 **“And on the last day, the great day of the festival, יהושע stood and cried out, saying, “If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me, and let him who believes in Me drink. 38 “As the Scripture said, out of His innermost shall flow rivers of living water.”**

The fountain of wisdom is a flowing stream!

The Hebrew root word used here for ‘fountain’ is מַקְוֶה maqor – Strong’s H4726 meaning, *‘a spring, fountain’* and comes from the root - קוּר qur – Strong’s H6979 which means, *‘to dig’* and we know we are to dig and seek out His kingdom and His righteousness – the question is whether people have found the True well of LIFE and are sitting and learning at it or is it a muddied counterfeit?

With יהוה is the FOUNTAIN OF LIFE!!!

Tehillah/Psalm 68:6 **“Bless Elohim in the assemblies, יהוה, from the fountain of Yisra’ĕl.”**

When we come to the FOUNTAIN OF LIFE and gather when we should, as an obedient flock who know His voice, then that Water of Life becomes a fountain in us as our lives are changed and our speech is renewed enabling us to bring life and healing to the nations!

Mishlĕ/Proverbs 10:11 **“The mouth of the righteous is a fountain of life, but violence covers the mouth of the wrong.”**

Mishlĕ/Proverbs 13:14 **“The Torah of the wise is a fountain of life, turning one away from the snares of death.”**

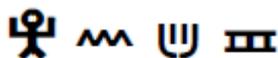
Mishlĕ/Proverbs 14:27 **“The fear of יהוה is a fountain of life, to turn away from the snares of death.”**

Mishlĕ/Proverbs 16:22 **“Understanding is a fountain of life to him who has it, but the disciplining of fools is folly.”**

יהושע is The Living Torah and our source of Life, or rather He is the Life of the Torah - and when we drink of Him – the FOUNTAIN OF LIFE begins to flow out of us as we gain understanding, and walk in the fear of יהוה by walking in the Torah, and our speech becomes a flowing source of life!!!

The Hebrew word for ‘wisdom’ is חֵכְמָה hokmah – Strong’s H2451 meaning, *‘wisdom, skill’* and is from the primitive root word חָכַם hakam – Strong’s H2449 meaning, *‘to be wise, skilful, make wise’*.

In the ancient pictographic alphabet, this Hebrew word for 'wisdom' - חֵכֶּמֶת *hokmah* – Strong's H2451 looks like this:



Het – ח:

The ancient script has this letter as  which is a 'tent wall', and carries a meaning of 'SEPARATION', as a tent wall separates two halves of the tent; or it can also reflect the outside walls that separate the people inside from that which is outside and so can also symbolise protection and security to those inside, while picturing a cutting off of those who are outside. Hence this letter can mean 'established, secure' as well as 'cut off, separated from'. As a tent wall we are also able to recognise the picture of stones being built up to make a complete wall, having been separated from the world and built up in the master!

Kaph - כ:

The ancient form of this letter is  - meaning 'the open palm of a hand'. The meaning behind this letter is 'to bend and curve' from the shape of a palm as well as 'to tame or subdue' as one has been bent to another's will (under their hand), as an open hand symbolises submission. This also can picture for us a palm or palm branch from the curved palm shape. The hand also speaks of one's work, or under whose hand you submit and obey!

Mem - מ:

The ancient script has this letter as  and is pictured as 'water', and also carries the meaning of 'chaos' (from the storms of the sea) and can also picture that which is mighty or massive as well as the unknown. We are also able to understand this letter as representing the nations, for the nations are often likened to the seas in Scripture. Knowing this letter represents 'water', we are also able to see how this can render for us the meaning of 'washing' or 'cleansing'.

Hey – ה:

The ancient script has this letter pictured as , which is 'a man standing with his arms raised out'. The meaning of the letter is "behold, look, breath, sigh and reveal or revelation"; from the idea of revealing a great sight by pointing it out. It also carries for us the meaning of surrender, as we lift up our hands and submit to יהוה as we lift our hands in praise, declaring His authority under which we humbly submit!

As we consider these pictographic letters that render for us the term for 'wisdom' we are able to clearly see that wisdom entails a separation, as pictured through the tent wall. We can render the meaning of the construction of this word, in terms of true wisdom, as meaning, **We are built up in the Master as we separate ourselves from the world as we submit under the hand of our Master and do what His Word instructs as it washes us, and enables us to lift our hands to Him in continual praise!**

Wisdom, at its core, speaks of one's ability to clearly separate the good from the bad, right and wrong, left and right, and up and down; and this we are to be able to do as we exercise true discipline – the discipline of separation!

Wisdom is often used in the context of a skilled workman that has been equipped by the Spirit of Elohim:

Shemoth/Exodus 28:3 "And you, speak to all the wise of heart, whom I have filled with a spirit of wisdom, and they shall make the garments of Aharon, to set him apart, for him to serve as priest to Me."

Wisdom in the ancient text can speak of a clear separation by the washing of one's hands; and as we consider the design of the Tabernacle, we need to be reminded that the bronze laver was used for the serving priests to wash their hands and feet; and clearly pictures for us how we are to be continually washing our work and walk through being immersed in the Word that transforms us!

The Hebrew root verb used here for 'pour out' is נָבַח *naba* – Strong's H5042 which means, 'to flow, spring, bubble up, pour forth, spout, gush forth'. This root word denotes a continual flowing or gushing forth. When we let the Word of Messiah dwell richly in us we become a continual flowing source of wisdom and life to others! On the other hand we also take note that when His word does not dwell in a person they may become a continual source of wickedness and lawlessness to others!

The Hebrew root word for 'stream' is נַחֲלָה *nahlah* – Strong's H5158 which means, 'torrent, torrent valley, wadi, brook, ravine, stream', and this usually referred to a dry river bed or ravine, which in rainy season becomes a raging torrent. It can also represent a permanent stream or river that flows like a torrent, as we see in Amos with the call to let righteousness flow like a mighty stream:

Amos 5:24 "And let right-ruling roll on like water, and righteousness like a mighty stream."

This can also symbolically represent for us the pride of the nations, the strength of the invader and the power of the enemy which can destroy the parched and dry places. When we are not being continually nourished in the Truth of the living word, and meditating on the Torah so that we are like a tree planted by the waters, we may become like a dry brook that the enemy can flood with his lies and confusion through **'mainstream traditions'**!

This word נַהֲלָהּ **nahlah** is also used in the positive sense in describing יהוה's pleasure over His set-apart ones:

Tehillah/Psalm 36:8 "They are filled from the fatness of Your house, and You give them drink from the river of Your pleasures."

When His Word dwells in us we become a true source of life as right-ruling and righteousness flows from deep within like a mighty stream!

Verse 5:

"It is not good to show partiality to the wrong, or to turn aside the righteous in right-ruling."

SHOW NO PARTIALITY!!! Shelomoh makes it clear to us that we are to not show any partiality to the wrong or turn aside the righteous in right-ruling! What he is teaching us is that we are to exercise proper right-ruling to all, whether to the wrong or to the righteous. We have one Torah for all!

Debarim/Deuteronomy 1:16-17 "And I commanded your judges at that time, saying, 'When hearing between your brothers, judge righteously between a man and his brother or the stranger who is with him. 17 Do not show partiality in right-ruling, hear the small as well as the great. Do not be afraid of anyone's face, for the right-ruling belongs to Elohim. And the case which is too hard for you, bring it to me, and I shall hear it.'"

Judging **'righteously'** is to do so according to the righteous right ruling of the Torah, showing no partiality!

Today we find that many claim the **'do not judge'** clause, while they clearly are lacking in their understanding of the Torah, when here we see clearly that we are to 'judge' righteously!

The Hebrew word used for **'judge'** is שָׁפַט **shaphat** – Strong's H8199 meaning, **'to judge, govern, decide, rule'**; and we do this according to the Word of יהוה.

Qolasim/Colossians 2:16-17 "Let no one therefore judge you in eating or in drinking, or in respect of a festival or a new moon or Sabbaths – 17 which are a shadow of what is to come – but the Body of the Messiah."

This verse, which is often misinterpreted and misunderstood by those who do not understand the Torah, is actually telling us, the Body of Messiah, to not let outsiders (those not walking in the Covenant) judge us, but we are to judge each other in the Body according to the righteous right-ruling and standards of the Torah and hold each other accountable to uphold the righteous standards of righteous living!

While we hold each other accountable, we do this by showing each other our sins/lawlessness so that we can realign our walk to be pure and righteous in Messiah, we certainly do not 'pass sentence' on each other, for while there is One Judge – יהושע Messiah – and all right-ruling belongs to Him, we are His Body who He has called to rightly rule according to His right-ruling!

We are told not to be afraid of anyone's face – for it is Elohim's right-ruling!

So many today try to make a person feel guilty for simply 'judging righteously' and here we are told clearly to not be afraid to 'judge righteously' according to His right-ruling – for it is His and not ours and when we simply obey and follow His right-ruling and standards we need not be afraid at anyone's reactions to our diligent obedience at rightly ruling on all matters. This is something that needs to be restored within the body today as far too many are 'doing their own thing' and when confronted as a result of compromise use the feeble excuse that we have no right to judge, when clearly we do – as long as it is according to the right-ruling of Elohim and that we show no partiality!

It is time for the body to take responsibility and keep each other accountable to walking according to the Truth. If we are afraid to do so we may just be dealt severely with by יהוה.

Yirmeyahu/Jeremiah 1:17 "Now, gird up your loins and arise, and speak to them all that I command you. Do not break down before their faces, lest I break you before them."

We have a responsibility to uphold the righteousness of His Torah and call each to account when that standard is not being upheld and 'judge righteously without partiality', not being afraid of any face!

When there are those who claim to be walking in Messiah and are not doing what his Torah calls for, be it in not adhering to the clear dietary commands or whether they neglect to gather at the set-apart gatherings commanded (including the weekly Sabbath), we must call them to account and judge righteously! Too many today are neglecting to gather for Sabbath fellowship (which is commanded in **Wayyiqra/Leviticus 23**), and when confronted they raise up the feeble wall of 'do not judge' – it is time we actually begin to judge righteously by that which belongs to Elohim!

Romiyim/Romans 2:11 "For there is no partiality with Elohim."

Ma'asei/Acts 10:34-35 "And opening his mouth, Kēpha said, "Truly I see that Elohim shows no partiality, 35 but in every nation, he who fears Him and works righteousness is accepted by Him."

Eph'siyim/Ephesians 6:9 **“And, masters, do the same to them, refrain from threatening, knowing that your own Master also is in the heavens, and there is no partiality with Him.”**

Qolasim/Colossians 3:25 **“But he who does wrong shall be repaid for the wrong which he has done, and there is no partiality.”**

Ya'aqob/James 2:1-9 **“My brothers, do not hold the belief of our Master יהושע Messiah, the Master of esteem, with partiality. 2 For if there should come into your meeting a man with gold rings, in a splendid robe, and there should also come in a poor one dressed in rags, 3 and you pay attention to the one wearing the splendid robe and say to him, “You sit here in a good place,” and say to the poor one, “You stand there,” or, “Sit here by my feet,” 4 have you not discriminated among yourselves, and become judges with wicked thoughts? 5 Listen, my beloved brothers: Has Elohim not chosen the poor of this world, rich in belief and heirs of the reign which He promised to those who love Him? 6 But you have shown disrespect towards the poor man. Do not the rich oppress you and drag you into the courts? 7 Do they not blaspheme that good Name by which you are called? 8 If you truly accomplish the sovereign law according to the Scripture, “You shall love your neighbour as yourself,” you do well, 9 but if you show partiality, you commit sin, being found guilty by the Torah as transgressors.”**

Kěpha Aleph/ 1Peter 1:17 **“And if you call on the Father, who without partiality judges according to each one's work, pass the time of your sojourning in fear”**

Verse 6-7:

“A fool's lips enter into strife, and his mouth calls for blows. 7 A fool's mouth is his ruin, and his lips are the snare of his life.”

The reason for me grouping these two verses together is simply because they both share the same theme in regards to the speech of fools.

The Hebrew root word translated as 'lips' is שָׂפָה saphah – Strong's H8193 which means, *'lip, speech, language'*.

The Hebrew word for 'mouth' is פֶּה peh – Strong's H6310 which means, *'mouth, commandment, edge, word'*. This word is used to reference the Word or commandments that come from the mouth of יהוה, as it is used approximately 50 times in the Tanak in reference to the mouth of Elohim. In Mishlě/Proverbs the use of פֶּה peh – Strong's H6310 predominately refers to man's mouth and not Elohim's. The mouth is the external manifestation of one's character and disposition. The mouth is the organ through which one's relationship to Elohim is ascertained.

Luqas/Luke 6:45-46 **“The good man brings forth what is good out of the good treasure of his heart, and the wicked man brings forth what is wicked out of the wicked treasure of his heart. For out of the overflow of the heart his mouth speaks. 46 “But why do you call Me ‘Master, Master,’ and do not do what I say?”**

Our speech reveals a lot, and as taught ones of the Most High we must guard against having foolish lips that cause strife and ruin, but have mouths that build up and impart what is pleasant and good to others:

Eph'siyim/Ephesians 4:29-31 **“Let no corrupt word come out of your mouth, but only such as is good for the use of building up, so as to impart what is pleasant to the hearers. 30 And do not grieve the Set-apart Spirit of Elohim, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. 31 Let all bitterness, and wrath, and displeasure, and uproar, and slander be put away from you, along with all evil.”**

Qolasim/Colossians 4:6 **“Let your word always be with favour, seasoned with salt, so that you know how you ought to answer each one.”**

What Shelomoh is saying here is that fools get into constant quarrels and verbal battles that cause strife and contention! What Shelomoh also tells us is that a fool's mouth invites a flogging. This can also give us the meaning that a fool causes fights as his words may provoke blows toward another. The words of a fool can often hurt more than physical actions and harm the receiver of foolish blows.

The Hebrew word translated in this parable for 'strife' is רִיב rib – Strong's H7379 which means, *'strife, contention, dispute, adversary, controversy'*, and comes from the primitive root verb רִיב rib – Strong's H7378 meaning, *'to strive, contend, argue, complain, find fault, quarrel'*.

The mouth of a fool is his ruin, and the Hebrew word for 'ruin' is מְהִיטָה mehittah – Strong's H4288 which means, *'terror, destruction, ruin'*, and comes from the root word הָתַתְּ hāthath – Strong's H2865 which means, *'to be shattered, dismayed, broken into pieces, abolished, afraid, break down or be scared'*.

The words that the fools speaks will bring about a ruin and sudden destruction, for the words they speak are words of falsehood and lies, and carry no life, whereas the wise speak life and bring about great knowledge of Elohim!

The Hebrew word translated as 'snare' is מוֹקֵשׁ moqesh – Strong's H4170 which means, *'a bait, lure, trap, snare, ensnared'*, and comes from the root verb יָקַשׁ yaqosh – Strong's H3369 which means, *'to lay a bait or lure, ensnared, set a trap'*.

As we walk in the clear instructions (Torah) of Elohim we walk in life and are delivered from the clear punishment of death, for the punishment of sin, which is lawlessness, is death!

The fool however is ensnared by the folly of his mouth and by his own words he shall not see life!

The Hebrew word translated as 'life' is the word נֶפֶשׁ 'nephesh' H5315 which is '*a soul, a living being, the inner being of a man*', and we are able to take note that a fools lips are a snare to his very being and existence!

Qoheleth/Ecclesiastes 10:11-14 **"If the snake bites without enchantment, then 'the master of the tongue' is no better! 12 Words of a wise man's mouth show favour, but the lips of a fool swallow him up; 13 the beginning of the words of his mouth is foolishness, and the end of his talk is wicked madness. 14 And a fool increases words; a man knows not what shall come to be; and who declares to him what shall be after him?"**

Foolish talk will get you into a lot of trouble and bring about much pain and loss! People who speak folly are often caught by their own words and what Shelomoh is teaching us here is that a fool brings about his own destruction by his foolish talk, teaching us that we must guard our mouths!

Mishlê/Proverbs 13:3 **"He who watches over his mouth guards his being, but he who opens wide his lips comes to ruin."**

Shelomoh continues to highlight the effect of the words that comes from our mouths, and what we do find is that when anyone does not actively think before they speak they tend to speak many words that only bring about ruin!

There are many today who claim to be 'religious' so to speak, and claim to be true believers, yet they refuse to walk in the Torah of Elohim and forsake His commands by blatantly showing no regard for the proper keeping of the Sabbaths of Feasts of Elohim, and in the process will have much to say about why they do not have to keep the Torah!

What they do not realise is that they are speaking falsehood and lies and are unable to properly bridle their tongue for as a result of a clear lack of knowledge. Ya'aqob warns us against this after making it clear that we are to be doers of the Word and not just hearers only:

Ya'aqob/James 1:27 **"If anyone among you thinks he is religious, and does not bridle his tongue but deceives his own heart, this one's religion is worthless."**

So many people's hearts are deceived by falsehood and vain traditions that are taught as teachings while the commands of Elohim are being scoffed at, and when confronted regarding a lawless lifestyle many resort to the vain argument that states, "He knows my heart", thinking that by making this statement that they have license to do as they wish and that Elohim will accept them in their depravity! What they do not recognise is that they are in fact correct when saying that Elohim knows their hearts, yet do not realise that the heart of man is crooked and wicked:

Yirmeyahu/Jeremiah 7:9-10 **"The heart is crooked above all, and desperately sick – who shall know it? 10 "וְיִחַדְוּ, search the heart, I try the kidneys, and give every man according to his ways, according to the fruit of his deeds."**

We are to 'watch over our mouths' in order to 'guard our beings'! In other words we must watch what we say and always make sure that we are speaking in line with the clear plumb line of the Torah of Elohim!

Verse 8:

"The words of a slanderer are like delicacies, and they go down into the inner parts of the heart."

In continuing to teach us about the power of words Shelomoh expresses how slander can be very deadly and go very deep into the inner parts of the heart!

The Hebrew word translated as 'slanderer' is נִרְגָן *nirgan* – Strong's H5372 which means, '*talebearer, murmurer, backbiter, slanderer, whisperer*', and comes from an unused root meaning to roll to pieces.

This word is only used in the proverbs of Shelomoh as seen in:

Mishlê/Proverbs 16:28 **"A perverse man sends forth strife, and a **whisperer** separates intimate friends."**

Mishlê/Proverbs 26:20 **"For lack of wood, the fire goes out, and without a **slanderer**, strife ceases."**

Mishlê/Proverbs 26:22 **"The words of a **slanderer** are as dainty morsels, which go down into the inner parts of the heart."**

Words of a slanderer go deep into the heart of a man and cause great destruction and we must not fuel the fire of slandering and whispering against others, for when there are no words of a slanderer strife comes to a halt!

Slandering can separate even the most intimate of friends! Words of a slanderer can affect the belief of many who are not well equipped in the truth, causing their hearts to become defiled with falsehood!

Shelomoh tells us that the words of a slanderer are like delicacies, and this should be a huge warning to us as we must guard ourselves so that we do not entertain any form of slander! The Hebrew word that is translated here as 'delicacies' is from the root word לָחַם *laham* – Strong's H3859 which means, '*to swallow greedily, dainty morsels*'. It is only used twice in Scripture; here in this verse as well as in:

Mishlê/Proverbs 26:22 **"The words of a slanderer are as **dainty morsels**, which go down into the inner parts of the heart."**

‘Delicacies’ or ‘dainty morsels’ refer to tasty food that is eagerly and greedily devoured. People love to hear gossip and slander just as they love to devour and swallow tasty and delicate food!

‘And they go down into the inner parts of the heart’ is written in the Hebrew as – **וְהֵם יָרְדוּ סְדְרֵי בֶטֶן** – ‘vehem yardu hadrey bathey’n’.

What is literally being told to us here is that the words of a slanderer are like delicacies that go down into the inner parts of the body or belly.

The word used for ‘go down’ is the root word **יָרַד yarad** – Strong’s H3381 which means, ‘to come or go down, descend’.

A common pattern or thread we see in Scripture is that whenever the reference is made of one going to Mitsrayim it is seen as ‘going down’, whereas whenever the reference of one going to Yerushalayim is made it is referred to as ‘going up’; and what we can clearly see from this is that to run after the pattern of the world and the flesh, with its many lusts, is a downward path that leads to destruction, whereas to walk in the true commands of Elohim and trust in יהוה is a picture of being able to ‘ascend’ or go up and draw near to Him in Messiah – the very path of obedience in Messiah that leads to abundant life!

The Hebrew root word for the term ‘into the inner parts’ is **הָדַר heder** – Strong’s H2315 which means, ‘chamber, room, bedroom, innermost parts, inner room’, and comes from the root word **הָדַר hadar** – Strong’s H2314 which means, ‘to surround, enclose’.

The word **הָדַר heder** – Strong’s H2315 is mainly used to describe a room where people can find privacy, and here in this parable we take note of how dangerous the words of a slanderer can be, as it gets deep into the privacy of a person! By that I mean that the words of a slanderer can go very deep and the hearer may even carry these slanderous words into the privacy of their own thoughts and emotions which can lead to more gossip and slander being brewed in the privacy of many! The **הָדַר heder** is also the place where one does evil in secret!

This word is used four times figuratively, in reference to ‘the chambers (or inner rooms) of the belly’.

How often have you seen someone who is a gossip and slanderer telling another to not reveal what they are speaking, as they want what has been said to be kept a secret from the one that they are speaking about?

The Hebrew term ‘of the heart’ is from the root word **בֶּטֶן beten** – Strong’s H990 which means, ‘belly, body, womb, stomach, inward parts’. The basic meaning of this word is simply ‘interior’ and in Hebrew denotes the ‘lower abdomen’. It can refer to a woman’s womb, or to the stomach, or be used in a figurative sense to express man’s physical nature. It is used several times in Scripture to express the deepest recesses of the person, and/or the seat of the desires.

So many people just love the words of a slanderer and the gossip of other, which further leads to the birthing of more slander from the one who hears it and lets the words go deep within their bellies! We are warned against slander and gossip!

Recognising this we are to exercise great care in the words we speak, and be on guard against speaking any slanderous words about others who have spoken to us in complete confidence!

Eph’siyim/Ephesians 4:31-32 “Let all bitterness, and wrath, and displeasure, and uproar, and slander be put away from you, along with all evil. 32 And be kind towards one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as Elohim also forgave you in Messiah.”

The Greek word used here for ‘slander’ is the noun **βλασφημία blasphemía** – Strong’s G988 which means, ‘slander, abusive language, blasphemy’, and comes from the adjective **βλάσφημος blasphemós** – Strong’s G989 means, ‘slanderous, speaking evil, abusive, reproachful, reviler’. You do not have to look too far to see many evil speaking and abusive slanderers! What is very sad is that you will even find people like this among claiming believers!

When understanding that ‘blasphemy’ speaks of a clear irreverence toward Elohim, we must recognise the danger of speaking against our brothers, who are a part of the Bride of Elohim, lest we find that we are being found to show little respect toward the body of Messiah!

Sha’ul makes it clear to Titos that he was to remind those he taught to not be slanderers!

Titos/Titus 3:1-2 “Remind them to be subject to rulers and authorities, to obey, to be ready for every good work, 2 not to slander anyone, not to be quarrelsome, to be gentle, showing all meekness to all men.”

The Greek word used here for ‘slander’ is the verb **βλασφημέω blasphemēō** – Strong’s G987 which means, ‘to slander, speak lightly or profanely of set apart things, hurl abuse, dishonour’.

The Merriam Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary defines ‘slander’ as:

1) “the utterance of false charges or misrepresentations which defame and damage another’s reputation”, and 2) “a false and defamatory oral statement about a person”

Shelomoh is teaching us to be trustworthy with our words and the words that are spoken to us in confidence, while also teaching us to makes sure that we do not speak falsely about another!

Mishlê/Proverbs 11:13 “A slanderer is a revealer of secrets, but one with a trustworthy spirit conceals a matter.”

The Hebrew root word translated here as ‘slanderer’ is רָכִיל *rakil* – Strong’s H7400 which means, ‘slander, slanderer, talebearer, informer, carry tales’, and comes from the root verb רָכַל *rakal* – Strong’s H7402 which means, ‘to go about (meaning dubious), trader, merchant, trafficker’.

A ‘slanderer’ is a person who goes about spreading information, whether true or false, with the motive of diminishing another, and goes about telling everyone matters that should not be revealed but rather kept a secret.

Mishlê/Proverbs 20:19 “He who goes about as a slanderer reveals secrets; therefore do not associate with him who speaks smoothly with his lips.”

We are clearly instructed in the Torah to not go slandering:

Wayyiqra/Leviticus 19:16 “Do not go slandering among your people. Do not stand against the blood of your neighbour. I am יהוה.”

To stand against the blood of your neighbour is understood as bearing false witness and speaking against the life of another!

Ya’aqob/James 4:11 “Brothers, do not speak against one another. He that speaks against a brother and judges his brother, speaks against Torah and judges Torah. And if you judge Torah, you are not a doer of Torah but a judge.”

Shelomoh makes it clear here that a slanderer is simply a talebearer that goes and speaks things about others that should not be spoken. The Hebrew word used for ‘secrets’ in Mishlê/Proverbs 11:13 is סוּד *sod* – Strong’s H5475 which means, ‘council, circle, company, assembly, fellowship, secret counsel, intimacy with El’. The primary meaning of the word is “confidential speech”, and gives in essence the confidence one ought to have in seeking counsel among his friends and brothers without fear of that counsel being revealed to those who are not involved or have any part in knowing about that which has been discussed in private!

Verse 9:

“Also, he who is slack in his work is a brother of a master destroyer.”

While Shelomoh makes it clear how damaging the words of a fool and slanderer can be he also tells us that one who is slack is also one who destroys!

The Hebrew word translated as ‘slack’ is the primitive root word רָפָה *raphah* – Strong’s H7503 meaning, ‘sink, relax, abandon, fall limp, slack, feeble, lazy’. This again reminds us that we are to not be lazy and let our hands hang limp but be strengthened in the Truth!

The word used in this verse for ‘work’ is מְלָאכָה *melakah* – Strong’s H4399 which means, ‘occupation, work, business, craftsmanship’ and comes from the same word as מַלְאָךְ *malak* – Strong’s H4397 meaning, ‘a messenger, ambassador, envoy’. The word מְלָאכָה *melakah* – Strong’s H4399 is also translated as ‘work’ in:

Mishlê/Proverbs 24:27 “Prepare your outside work, and make it fit for yourself in the field; then you shall build your house.”

This is a very powerful parable that is given to us here by Shelomoh as we recognise the clear language of our responsibility in building a proper house!

The Hebrew word used here for ‘prepare’ is כִּוֵּן *kun* – Strong’s H3559 which means, ‘ready, steadfast, established, firm, set up, determined, prepared’, and it is written in the ‘hiphil active’ tense which can carry the meaning of, ‘to establish, set up, accomplish, so, make firm, provide’.

What is being clearly expressed here is the urgency of our need to be established as faithful ambassadors while we are in the field, that is the world, and when we have made ourselves fit, as a Bride should be, then our Husband can come and fetch us and build His House!

The one who is ‘slack’ and ‘lazy’ in being the proper ambassador of Messiah is a relative of the devil who destroys!

The Hebrew word used here for ‘brother’ is אָח *ah* – Strong’s H251 which means, ‘brother, alike, fellow countryman, kinsman, relative’, and the term ‘master destroyer’ is written in the Hebrew as – בַּעַל מַשְׁחִית – ‘ba’al mashhiyth’ – which is from the two root words: 1) בַּעַל *ba’al* – Strong’s H1167 which means, ‘owner, lord, master, land owner’, and at its root form it means, ‘to marry, rule over, husband’. We also take note that the name בַּעַל *Ba’al* – Strong’s H1168 was the name of a Phoenician deity and as a name it can be rendered from the Hebrew into English as ‘The Lord’!!! This is a very sobering reality as we recognise how so many people who refuse to walk according to the Torah and are, in essence, slack in their work of obedience, simply show themselves as being brothers of the master destroyer or ‘The Lord who destroys’!

Melakim Aleph/1 Kings 18:21 “And Ēliyahu came to all the people, and said, “How long would you keep hopping between two opinions? If יהוה is Elohim, follow Him; and if Ba’al, follow him.” But the people answered him not a word.”

If we translate the Hebrew of the highlighted text correctly into English we would better have the following:

If יהוה is Elohim, follow Him; and if The Lord, follow him.

For many this may seem offensive, yet to the true hearer and doer of the Truth this is a sobering reality of what false traditions of man has done, causing many to be slack in their work of called for set-apartness and obedience and making them relatives of the master destroyer – that is Satan, while they claim to be calling on the True Master yet by their slackness they show that they are not known by the True Master and Elohim!!!

Luqas/Luke 13:25-28 “When once the Master of the house has risen up and shut the door, and you begin to stand outside and knock at the door, saying, ‘Master, Master, open for us,’ and He shall answer and say to you, ‘I do not know you, where you are from,’ 26 then you shall begin to say, ‘We ate and drank in Your presence, and You taught in our streets.’ 27 “But He shall say, ‘I say to you I do not know you, where you are from. Depart from Me, all you workers of unrighteousness.’ 28 “There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when you see Abraham and Yitsḥaq and Ya‘aqob and all the prophets in the reign of Elohim, and yourselves thrown outside.”

Knowing our Elohim as Husband and not only as Master, is brought forth as a result of a loving relationship that obeys the Master’s voice:

Luqas/Luke 6:46 “But why do you call Me ‘Master, Master,’ and do not do what I say?”

The lazy and slack ones do not do what our Master and Elohim says, and therefore reveal that they are not true set-apart ones but are relatives of the destroyer!

The Hebrew word translated here in this parable of Shelomoh as ‘destroyer’ is מַשְׁחִית mashḥith – Strong’s H4889 which means, ‘ruin, destruction, deathly pallor, destroy, corruption’, which comes from the root verb שָׁחַת shahath – Strong’s H7843 meaning, ‘destroy, ruin, spoil, pervert, corrupt’.

Messiah made it clear who his brothers were:

Mattithyahu/Matthew 12:49-50 “And having stretched out His hand toward His taught ones, He said, “See My mother and My brothers! 50 “For whoever does the desire of My Father who is in the heavens is My brother and sister and mother.”

The one who is slack is not a brother of Messiah, but is a brother of a master destroyer!

This parable is a clear warning against being slack and lazy, for one’s identity in the True Master is at stake!

Verse 10:

“The Name of יהוה is a strong tower; the righteous run into it and are safe.”

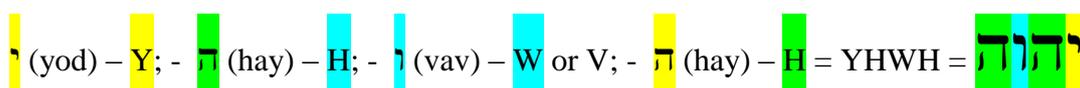
Here Shelomoh highlights the importance of the Name of יהוה, for His Name is the strength and refuge of the righteous. Knowing this we are able to see why the enemy has done whatever he can to get people to not know the Name of יהוה. When Mosheh asked Elohim what he should say to the children of Yisra’el when they would ask him what the Name of the Elohim of their fathers is, he received the following answer:

Shemoth/Exodus 3:14-16 “And Elohim said to Mosheh, “I am that which I am.” And He said, “Thus you shall say to the children of Yisra’el, ‘I am has sent me to you.’” 15 And Elohim said further to Mosheh, “Thus you are to say to the children of Yisra’el, יהוה Elohim of your fathers, the Elohim of Abraham, the Elohim of Yitsḥaq, and the Elohim of Ya‘aqob, has sent me to you. This is My Name forever, and this is My remembrance to all generations.”

I AM THAT WHICH I AM – in Hebrew is – אֲנִי אֲשֶׁר אֲנִי – **eyeh asher eyeh** – The root word from which ‘eyeh’ comes from is הָיָה hayah – Strong’s H1961 which means, ‘to be, to become, to be in existence’ and the root word אֲשֶׁר asher – Strong’s H834 which is a primitive pronoun that means, ‘who, which, that, that which’ and is a marker of a relative reference to an entity, event, or state. The first ‘eyeh’ is written as a proper noun, singular, masculine, while the second ‘eyeh’ is written in the qal active verb tense and in essence we see Elohim making it clear here to Mosheh that “The One who exists is the One who causes to exist, or gives existence” or “The All existing One is the One who gives existence” Literally speaking it can render, “I AM the One who causes to be”, or “I AM the One who brings into being”, as well as “I AM the life-giver, the giver of all existence”, and “I AM the ever living self-consistent and unchangeable One”. This however is not The Name of Elohim, but was rather an explanation that would lead up to the revelation of His Name, which we see in **verse 15** is clearly declared as: יהוה – Strong’s H3068 which is derived from the root word הָיָה hayah – Strong’s H1961.

The above Name, is known also as the Tetragrammaton (four letters), and the four Hebrew letters are:

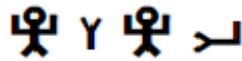
יהוה - from right to left are: 

 (yod) – Y; -  (hay) – H; -  (vav) – W or V; -  (hay) – H = YHWH = 

These 4 letters transliterated as **YHWH** from the True Scriptural Name of The Almighty El. And when we speak the Name of the Almighty All-Existent One and express the 4 letters of His Name we are declaring that the Great I AM causes me to be.

While there has been widely contested debates on how to pronounce the His Name, we believe that the use of YAHWEH, YAHVEH or YAHUWAH are all acceptable in expressing the Name of the One who gives us life, with the primary emphasis being on the **YAH** sound, which in Scripture is also rendered as His Name well over 50 times and is not seen as just a contracted form of the Name but rather constitutes the fullness of His Name.

Why I am sharing this with you is to simply lay a foundation in understanding more clearly who our Shepherd is, as we will see that not only does the One who exists and gives existence, 'cause us to be' but the **CAUSER OF LIFE** also shepherds us! We are also given further insight into the revelation of the Great I AM as we see being displayed or spoken through the ancient pictographic script, which renders the Name of יהוה as follows:



Yod – י:

In the Ancient Script this is the letter 'yad or yod' which is pictured as - י - which is the picture of **an arm and hand** and carries the meaning of '**work, make, throw**' from the primary functions of the arm and hand and also represents worship or giving thanks in the extending of hands as a gesture of this. This also reveals to us a stretched out arm and hand.

Hey - ה:

The ancient script has this letter as ה and is pictured as a **man standing with his arms raised up and out** as if pointing to something, and in essence carries the meaning of '**behold**' as in when looking at something very great. It can also have the meaning to '**breath**' or '**sigh**' as when looking at a great sight and having your breath taken away so to speak! It also has the meaning of **revelation** or to reveal something by pointing it out.

Waw - ו:

The ancient pictographic form of this letter is ו, which is a **peg** or '**tent peg**' or **nail**, which was used for securing or tying the tent or other items. The possibility of it having a Y-shape is to show that it prevents the rope from slipping off. The root meaning of this letter is '**to add, secure or hook**'.

In the pictographic representation of the Name of Elohim we are able to clearly see how He, the All Existing One, revealed Himself to His Creation through His Outstretched Arm and Hand. The two pictures of the man and the peg in between them also gives us insight as to how He would come and reveals Himself in the form of a man and secure the Covenants of promise, and in this we are able to see the two comings of Messiah.

Behold the Outstretched Arm of the All Existing One shall come and secure His Covenant and Redeem us in order to establish His House for which He is coming again!

Today, you will find that many professing believers do not even know the Name of the One they call upon. So if they don't know His Name, who or what are they calling upon? Why do they not know His Name?

Everyone wants to feels safe, everyone wants to have a sense of security and safety, for it is when you feel safe and secure that you will perform your tasks and duties at optimum efficiency. The verse quoted here from **Mishlê/Proverbs 18:10** is such a wonderful promise to all who trust and rely upon the Name of יהוה.

How many times do many so often find themselves relying and trusting on their own provision and abilities (that ויהי has given) and easily forget to depend and rely upon the Name of יהוה?

I am sure we all have done it more times than we would care to admit, but the fact is we are to realise just how secure we are in His Name!

The Name of יהוה... "**Is a strong tower**" – A strong tower for what? What picture comes to your mind when you think of a strong tower? One that can give you protection and keep you free from physical danger! By turning to the Name of יהוה is likened to a person being able to hide in a strong tower and be safe from the attack of their enemy. A strong tower was the essential part of a city's defence and was an assured place of safety and protection from an enemy's attacks.

'Numbers' cannot give you safety and security! In other words we recognise that the common saying of 'strength in numbers' is not a true saying, as we just need to look at the many examples we have in Scripture where the opposite is true, as יהוה used the remnant or minority in order to reveal His Mighty Strength!

The wealthy think or imagine that their wealth can protect them from harm as a high city wall used to protect them from the enemy troops, but the wealthy are wrong. Money simply cannot shield people from many problems – many try to hide behind their money, yet they are not free or safe from those problems. Trusting in יהוה as opposed to trusting in your wealth is the difference between a strong tower and imagined walls. The Name of יהוה is a strong tower, whereas security in one's wealth can only put up imaginary walls!

The term '**strong tower**' is written here in this parable as – מִגְדָּל – 'migdal – oz', which is from the two words:

- 1 - **מִגְדָּל migdal** – Strong’s H4026 which means, *‘tower, podium, watchtower’*, and comes from the root verb גָּדַל gadal – Strong’s H1431 – and this root word is used 115 times in the Tanak and has the meaning, *‘to grow up, become great, to cause to be large, magnify, boast, lift up, promote’*, and is often used as a word to express praise for יהוה.
- 2 - **עָז az** – Strong’s H5797 which means, *‘strength, might, fortress, power, stronghold’*, and comes from the root verb עָזַז azaz – Strong’s H5810 which means, *‘to be strong, be brazen, prevail, display boldness’*

The first time that the Hebrew word **מִגְדָּל migdal** – Strong’s H4026 is used is in:

Berēshith/Genesis 11:4-5 *“And they said, “Come, let us build ourselves a city, and a tower whose top is in the heavens, and make a name for ourselves, lest we be scattered over all the face of the earth. 5 Then יהוה came down to see the city and the tower which the sons of men had built.”*

This **‘tower’** that men had built was the tower of Babel which caused יהוה to come and confuse the language of the people and scatter the people all over the earth. I find this to be a great lesson for us in recognising that the Name of יהוה is our Strong Tower and we do not need to be in any state of confusion in regards to our identity in Him by trying to build man made towers that have no strength or power. This took place at **בְּבֶל Babel** – Strong’s H894, which was the name given to this site that was formerly called **Shin’ar** - שִׁנְעָר - Strong’s H8152 – *‘country of two rivers’* because יהוה confused the language of all the earth. **בְּבֶל Babel** – Strong’s H894 comes from the verb **בָּלַל balal** – Strong’s H1101 meaning, *‘to mingle, mix, confuse, confound’* and therefore **בְּבֶל Babel** can best be understood as meaning, *‘confusion (by mixing)’*. Today we take note that so many who have not come out of the confusion of man-made theologies, are building their own towers of religion and do not know the True Name of יהוה, as they have substituted His Name for titles that are pagan rooted in their origin and make people assume that they have a place of refuge and strength in false titles yet have no idea what the True Name of יהוה is and risk being thrown out for building upon a confused and twisted theologies, traditions and lies of man.

The Name of יהוה is the only true source of Safety as we recognise who it is who saves us and who it is who shelters us and shields us from the fiery darts of the enemy!

The righteous run into IT and are safe!

The **‘IT’** being referred to here is the Name of יהוה. The Hebrew used here word for **‘righteous’** is **צַדִּיק tsaddiq** – Strong’s H6662 which means, *‘just, righteous, blameless, lawful’* and comes from the primitive root **צָדַק tsadeq** – Strong’s H6663 which means, *‘to be just or righteous, justified, properly restored’*.

What we are able to take note of in this phrase, **‘the righteous run into it and are safe’**, is that there are some key elements being mentioned here. Firstly it is **‘the righteous’**, secondly **‘running’** and thirdly **‘safety’**. Only the righteous may enter! It is the righteous who are running to His Name. I find these two elements of **‘the righteous’** and **‘running’** go hand in hand. The root word for **‘run’** is **רָץ ruts** – Strong’s H7323 which means, *‘to run, run with speed, and perform an action with a special focus that it is done in a hurried manner’*. This **‘running of the righteous’** is a wonderful picture of urgency and a committed faith.

Righteous, as we know, is clearly defined for us in:

Debarim/Deuteronomy 6:25 *“And it is righteousness for us when we guard to do all this command before יהוה our Elohim, as He has commanded us.”*

Dawid tells us in:

Tehillah/Psalm 119:32 *“I run the way of Your commands, for You enlarge my heart.”*

The Greek word used in the **LXX** (Septuagint) for **‘run’** here in this Tehillah/Psalm 119:32 is **τρέχω trechō** – Strong’s G5143 which means, *‘run, exert oneself, strive hard, spend one’s strength in performing or attaining something’* and is a present continuous duty – that means it does not stop! This word is used in:

Ib’rim/Hebrews 12:1-2 *“We too, then, having so great a cloud of witnesses all around us, let us lay aside every weight and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us run with endurance the race set before us, 2 looking to the Princely Leader and Perfecter of our belief, יהושע, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the stake, having despised the shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of Elohim.”*

This **‘running’** of **‘the righteous’**, which is a running in the way of the commands of Elohim, is also a personal responsibility – and that means that you have to run your own race – nobody else can run it for you. This word for run/running also means to advance quickly, in a military context, and denotes the objective of our spiritual walk/race – which is to overcome obstacles for the sake of advancement unto spiritual maturity. Running with endurance is literally a persistent movement toward that spiritual maturity.

If one is not guarding to do all the commands of Elohim then one is not running and is clearly not a righteous one!

We are to run as if to win the prize – that means giving it our all. We are to make every effort, as a seasoned professional athlete would, in running the righteous race amidst an unrighteous world.

When we 'run' as we should then we are assured that we are 'safe'. The Hebrew word that is translated as 'safe' is comes from the primitive root verb שָׁגַב *sagab* – Strong's H7682 which means, **'to be (inaccessibly) high, exalted, lifted, safe, set securely on high'**. Being 'set on high' is a clear picture of safety, where complete trust in יהוה is understood and lived out in complete loving-commitment, having nothing to fear as one is completely lifted to safety! This word is translated as 'set on high' in:

Mishlê/Proverbs 29:25 "The fear of man brings a snare, but whoever trusts in יהוה is set on high."

Tehillah/Psalm 20:1 "יהוה does answer you in the day of distress! The Name of the Elohim of Ya'aqob does set you on high!"

The Name of יהוה is our defence – there can be no safer place to run to than to the One who causes us to be and sets us on high! Those who do not know His Name have nowhere to run. Many are confused into thinking that they know Him by another name or title and reject the need to walk in His commands, which will result in them being cast away as one's that He never knew, even while they called Him Master!

There are many today who claim that knowing the Name of יהוה is not important, yet this is so far from the Truth, as Scripture clearly tells us that all who call upon the Name of יהוה shall be delivered (saved).

Yo'el/Joel 2:32 "And it shall be that everyone who calls on the Name of יהוה shall be delivered. For on Mount Tsiyon and in Yerushalayim there shall be an escape as יהוה has said, and among the survivors whom יהוה calls."

Shelomoh is making it very clear in this parable that the Name of יהוה is extremely important, especially as we recognise our need to be armed in the Truth and stand our ground as we fight the good fight, knowing that in Him we are safe as He fights for us!

The safety of His Name will give us the strength to be strong and courageous in life's battles! We are safe in His Name and we need not fear whatever may come across our path as we run with endurance and great joy the faith race of life in Him. **Tehillah/Psalm 91:14 "Because he cleaves to Me in love, therefore I deliver him; I set him on high, because he has known My Name."**

What a beautiful verse! Cleaving to יהוה – how will one be able to 'cleave' to another if they do not know them? For the sake of His Name He delivers us and sets us on high – us who cleave to Him

The word in Hebrew used here for 'cleave' is הִשָּׂק *hashaq* – Strong's H2836 and it means to, **'love, set one's affection upon, be attached and to delight in'**. Another translation puts it like this: **"... because he loves Me, I will rescue him and protect him for he acknowledges My name!"** It is all about His Name, and we are to acknowledge His Name.

Verse 11:

"The rich man's wealth is his strong city, and like a high wall in his own imagination."

Shelomoh continues from the previous verse in presenting the theme of safety. Only this time he highlights the wrong assumption of safety. In **verse 10** he makes it clear that the Name of יהוה is a strong tower and a secure place of refuge and safety for the righteous that run in the way of His commands, and here in this **verse 11** Shelomoh teaches us the clear danger of the rich man's wealth. Many who are rich in this world think that their wealth is their security and firmly believe it as their imagination can see nothing else!

While there is certainly no sin in being rich, we do recognise that Scripture clearly warns against the dangers of being rich! Messiah tells us that it is harder for a rich man to enter into the reign than for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, and the reason for Him telling us this is that it is extremely hard for those who are rich to find their dependency and safety in יהוה. This parable clearly contrasts the safety in wealth versus the safety in the Name of יהוה in the previous verse.

A strong city was a walled city that gave protection to those inside the city, and what Shelomoh is saying here is that too many think that if you have wealth you have safety, and the rich use their money to get what they want.

While the rich may assume to have safety and a secure future we see that יהוה makes it clear in Yirmeyahu/Jeremiah that the rich must not boast in their wealth.

Yirmeyahu/Jeremiah 9:23-24 "Thus said יהוה, "Let not the wise boast in his wisdom, let not the mighty boast in his might, nor let the rich boast in his riches, 24 but let him who boasts boast of this, that he understands and knows Me, that I am יהוה, doing kindness, right-ruling, and righteousness in the earth. For in these I delight," declares יהוה."

While there is certainly nothing wrong with being rich, what one must be careful of when becoming rich, is that one must never put their trust in their riches.

Evil is not in one's riches themselves but rather in one's attitude toward them! In the words of Aḡur son of Yaqeh, we see that the tension between the benefits and dangers of riches or excess is best expressed in his prayer, as recorded in:

Mishlê/Proverbs 30:8-9 “Remove falsehood and a lying word far from me; give me neither poverty nor riches; feed me my portion of bread; 9 lest I become satisfied and deny You, and say, “Who is יהוה?” And lest I be poor, and steal, and seize the Name of my Elohim.”

The danger of one becoming satisfied in riches is that one may end up denying who it is who gives the ability to obtain wealth and begin to rely on their own abilities!

The Hebrew word translated here in this parable of Shelomoh for ‘wealth’ is הון hon – Strong’s H1952 which means, ‘wealth, sufficiency, possession’, and is translated as ‘riches’ in:

Mishlê/Proverbs 11:4 “Riches do not profit in the day of wrath, but righteousness delivers from death.”

No matter how secure a rich man may feel with all his wealth, it will not be able to protect him in the day of the wrath of Elohim!

Tsephanyah/Zephaniah 1:14-18 “Near is the great day of יהוה, near and hurrying greatly, the noise of the day of יהוה. Let the mighty man then bitterly cry out! 15 That day is a day of wrath, a day of distress and trouble, a day of waste and ruin, a day of darkness and gloominess, a day of clouds and thick darkness, 16 a day of ram’s horn and alarm – against the walled cities and against the corner towers. 17 “And I shall bring distress on men, and they shall walk like blind men – because they have sinned against יהוה, and their blood shall be poured out like dust and their flesh like dung.” 18

Neither their silver nor their gold shall be able to deliver them in the day of the wrath of יהוה. And by the fire of His jealousy all the earth shall be consumed, for He makes a sudden end of all those who dwell in the earth.”

The Hebrew term ‘does not profit’ is written as follows לא יועיל – lo yoyail’ and comes from the two root words: 1) לא lo – Strong’s H3808 is the primitive adverb that means, ‘not, no, never, neither’, and 2) יעל ya’al – Strong’s H3276 which means, ‘to confer or gain profit or benefit, avail, furnish, that which is profitable and good’. No amount of possession or wealth is going to benefit you in the day of the wrath of Elohim.

Luqas/Luke 12:15-21 “And He said to them, “Mind, and beware of greed, because one’s life does not consist in the excess of his possessions.”

Mattithyahu/Matthew 6:26 “For what is a man profited if he gains all the world, and loses his own life? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his life?”

What we must take clear note of here is that these verses are not saying that there is anything wrong with having the blessing of wealth and riches that comes from Elohim, but rather that one must never put their trust in their riches or wealth, for they cannot save you or gain you any special treatment when the wrath of Elohim comes. The only protection we have against His wrath is to walk in righteousness, for that delivers us from death!

The wealth of a rich man is his strong city and is like a high wall in his own imagination! ‘A high wall in his own imagination’ – Shelomoh is teaching us here the dangers of trusting in one’s wealth, as trust in riches will lead to one setting up high walls of imagination.

The Hebrew word that is translated as ‘imagination’ is from the root word מַשְׁכִּית מַשְׁכִּית maskiyth – Strong’s H4962 which means, ‘a showpiece, figure, imagination, carved image, figured stone’ and can also be understood to mean ‘that which is visible, that which can be beheld’. What is worth taking note of here is that we are clearly told not to set up a מַשְׁכִּית maskiyth – Strong’s H4962 of stone, and is translated as ‘image’ in:

Wayyiqra/Leviticus 26:1 “Do not make idols for yourselves, and do not set up a carved image or a pillar for yourselves, and do not place a stone image in your land, to bow down to it. For I am יהוה your Elohim.”

This is a very important command to take heed of, especially as we see from Shelomoh’s parable of what the wealth of a rich man can become! The high wall of imagination that a rich man sets up in his mind in regards to his wealth is no different to placing a stone image in one’s land!

The imagination of a high wall that protects is the stone image of a false trust in one’s riches. The understanding of this being an imagination tells us that it is an empty assumption that will not protect one when the wrath of Elohim comes to destroy that which has been exalted against the Most High!

The Greek word used here for ‘rich man’ is πλούσιος plousios – Strong’s G4145 which means, ‘wealthy, rich man, rich people’. As I already mentioned, Messiah teaches us very clearly that it is harder for the rich to enter into the reign of the heavens:

Mattithyahu/Matthew 19:23-24 “And יהושע said to His taught ones, “Truly, I say to you that it is hard for a rich man to enter into the reign of the heavens. 24 And again I say to you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter into the reign of Elohim.”

These words he said after a rich man could not sell all he had and give to the poor and follow Messiah, for he had many possessions and while he thought that he had done well all his life by guarding the commands, he still lacked one thing – and that was that he had put his trust and security and identity in his riches and was unable to let go of them!

There were some rich men that did great things and used their wealth for kingdom purposes, and one of them was Yoseph from Ramathayim who became a taught one of יהושע Messiah. He was the one who went and asked Pilate for the body of יהושע, and having taken the body wrapped it in clean linen and laid it in his new tomb that he hewn out of the rock.

Sha'ul told Timotiyos the following:

Timotiyos Aleph/1 Timothy 6:17-19 “Charge those who are rich in this present age not to be high-minded, nor to trust in the uncertainty of riches, but in the living Elohim, who gives us richly all for enjoyment, 18 to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous, ready to share, 19 storing up for themselves a good foundation for the time to come, so that they lay hold on everlasting life.”

These words clearly summarise the charge given to those who are rich!!! It is יהוה who gives the ability to get wealth:

Debarim/Deuteronomy 8:18 “But you shall remember יהוה your Elohim, for it is He who gives you power to get wealth, in order to establish His covenant which He swore to your fathers, as it is today.”

The power to get wealth comes from יהוה, and anyone who gets wealth must never forget this, for we recognise that the danger to forget is very real, as many who are wealthy do begin to trust in their own riches and neglect to do good to others as commanded, and in the process become so self-secured in their own wealth as they build a city, so to speak, around themselves thinking that nothing will harm them, and they do not need anything!

Messiah warned the assembly in Laodikeia who thought that they were rich:

Hazon/Revelation 3:17-18 “Because you say, ‘Rich I am, and I am made rich, and need none at all,’ and do not know that you are wretched, and pitiable, and poor, and blind, and naked. 18 “I advise you to buy from Me gold refined in the fire, so that you become rich; and white garments, so that you become dressed, so that the shame of your nakedness might not be shown; and anoint your eyes with ointment, so that you see.”

The lukewarm believers of Laodikeia said that they were rich enough and were clearly arrogant in their claims to be self-made businessmen who did not need anyone's assistance or guidance; and they showed no praise for Elohim who is the one who gives us the ability to get wealth.

They assumed that they were in no need, as they relied on worldly possessions and positions of prominence in the world to determine their success, and Ephrayim, in speaking of the scattered tribes of the House of Yisra'el, used the same words:

Hosh'ea/Hosea 12:8 “And Ephrayim says, “Indeed, I have become rich, I have found wealth for myself. In all my labours they shall find in me no crookedness that is sin.”

When people's eyes are fixed on materialism they are unable to see clearly and are unaware and blind to their crookedness and sin, thinking that they are blessed and have the wealth to prove it! Messiah makes it clear to these lukewarm believers that they were focused on the wrong things and were putting their trust in their own riches which can never save!

Sha'ul tells us clearly in:

Pilipiyim/Philippians 4:19 “And my Elohim shall fill all your need according to His riches in esteem by Messiah יהושע.”

יהושע tells us clearly in **Yohanan/John 15:5-6** that without Him we are able to do nought, and if anyone does not stay in Him they are thrown away and are burned!! The words given here to Laodikeia are no different – if you think you are fine on your own – well then I have news for you...!!!

Wretched, pitiable, poor blind and naked!!! This assembly had become proud and measured things by human standards instead of spiritual values. They may have had beautiful clothes but יהושע urged them to wear white robes of righteousness which would cover their spiritual nakedness, in contrast to the famous black wool garments from the region. He then exhorted them to put salve on their eyes, and this was not the salve common to the city but rather the ‘heavenly eye salve’ – that is the ointment of the spiritual matters that are from above that can only be spiritually discerned. These people were living in a fool's paradise and were blind to reality – pretty much the state of many claiming believers today, whose vain imaginations have them assuming a false safety that has no need for יהוה and the safety of His Name!

Verse 12:

“Before destruction the heart of a man is haughty, and before esteem is humility.”

This verse is very similar to that which we find in:

Mishl'e/Proverbs 16:18 “Before destruction comes pride, and before a fall a haughty spirit!”

What is clearly being taught to us through both of these parables is that haughtiness and pride go hand in hand, and they lead to destruction! This is a clear truth that should be taken as a severe warning against pride, for the truth is that destruction follows pride and the one with a haughty spirit will fall, meaning that if you look down on others you will be brought low!

The Hebrew word translated as ‘destruction’ is the word שֶׁבֶר sheber – Strong's H7667 which means, ‘a breaking, fracture, crushing, breach, smashing’ and comes from the root word שָׁבַר shabar – Strong's H7665 which means, ‘break in pieces, crush, shatter’. The first time that we see this word שֶׁבֶר sheber – Strong's H7667 being used it is translated as a ‘broken’ foot and ‘broken’ hand in:

Wayyiqra/Leviticus 21:19 “a man who has a broken foot or broken hand”

This was part of the clear instruction of who was not able to draw near to bring the bread of his Elohim, and this further emphasises our need for the redemptive and atoning work of Messiah, through whom we have been given access to boldly come to the throne of favour is our time of need.

We also understand from Scripture that the hand and foot are often used metaphorically in describing one’s walk and work, and what we take note of here is that the proud and lofty one who does not walk in the ways of Elohim and who refuses to do what is commanded will be destroyed along with all transgressors!

Yeshayahu/Isaiah 1:28 “And the destruction of transgressors and of sinners is together, and those who forsake יהוה shall be consumed.”

Before destruction a man’s heart is haughty, teaching us that it is haughtiness that leads to destruction!

The Hebrew word translated as ‘haughty’ is the root verb גָּבַחַּ **gabahh** – Strong’s H1361 which means, ‘to be high, exalted, pride, build high, haughty’, and can also give reference to one being proud and lifting themselves up, instead of humbling themselves in complete submission to the Torah of Elohim! יהושע Messiah tells us in:

Mattithyahu/Matthew 23:12 “And whoever exalts himself shall be humbled, and whoever humbles himself shall be exalted.”

The noun that is derived from the root verb גָּבַחַּ **gabahh** – Strong’s H1361 is גֹּבַחַּ **gobah** – Strong’s H1363 which means, ‘height, haughty, lofty, proud, raised platform, excellency, exaltation, grandeur’.

We have a good example in Scripture of a king who was sick and about to die and he prayed to יהוה yet his heart was lifted up (גָּבַחַּ **gabahh** – Strong’s H1361) and as a result wrath came upon him and the people, after which he humbled himself for the pride (גֹּבַחַּ **gobah** – Strong’s H1363) of his heart!

Dibre haYamim Bet/2 Chronicles 32:24-26 “In those days Hizqiyahu was sick and near death, and he prayed to יהוה . And He spoke to him and appointed a sign for him. 25 However, Hizqiyahu did not repay according to the good done to him, for his heart was lifted up, therefore wrath came upon him and upon Yehudah and Yerushalayim. 26 Then Hizqiyahu humbled himself for the pride of his heart, he and the inhabitants of Yerushalayim, so that the wrath of יהוה did not come upon them in the days of Hizqiyahu.”

After having warned against haughtiness and pride Shelomoh tells us what will cause one to be esteemed, and that is humility!

The Hebrew word translated here as ‘humility’ is עֲנָוָה **anavah** – Strong’s H6038 and means, ‘humility, gentleness’, and comes from the root word עָנָה **anah** – Strong’s H6031 which means, ‘to be bowed down, afflicted, humbled’. This carries the understanding of being ‘grounded’ as well as the ability to ‘pay close attention’ and open one’s ears to hear! It carries the concept of denying oneself and submitting to Elohim as you understand, and are aware of, one’s status before an Almighty Elohim who has appointed for us His Door of Appointment!

Ya’aqob tells us clearly in:

Ya’aqob/James 4:10 “Humble yourselves in the sight of the Master, and He shall lift you up.”

The one who is truly humble subjects himself to Elohim and Ya’aqob also tells us in **Ya’aqob/James 4:6** that Elohim resist the proud and gives favour to the humble! As I have mentioned previously on a number of occasions, favour (grace) is only extended by יהוה on the basis of His Covenants of Promise – and anyone who does not walk in or stay in His Covenants of Promise that they have been grafted into by the Blood of Messiah, by guarding to do what has been commanded, are not extended the favour of Elohim! (For more on this please see article – **UNDERSTANDING GALATIANS** on our website under the articles menu).

Walking in humility is expressed clearly as one fixes their eyes on the Truth and walks in it, not looking to one’s own ways, nor leaning on one’s own understanding!

The Hebrew word for ‘esteem’ is כְּבוֹד **kabod** – Strong’s H3519 which means, ‘honour, esteem, reverence, splendid’, which comes from the root verb כָּבַד **kabed** – Strong’s H3513 which means, ‘to be heavy, weighty or burdensome, to give high esteem and respect and honour’, and is often translated as ‘praise’ that is to be given to יהוה!

The word כְּבוֹד **kabod** – Strong’s H3519 can also have the understanding of, ‘the manifestation of power’, which represents the fullness of the power or strength of the One who is lifted up and exalted. Mosheh wanted to see the esteem of יהוה:

Shemoth/Exodus 33:18 “Then he said, “Please, show me Your esteem.”

In a desperate seeking of the full manifestation of the power and esteem of יהוה, Mosheh was given a clear directive to stand on the rock and that when the esteem of יהוה passed by that יהוה would put him in the cleft of the rock and cover him with His Hand – for this is the promise יהוה gave when he declared – “See, there is a place with Me!”

The Hebrew word for 'place' is מקום *maqom* – Strong's H4725 which means, **'standing place, place, home, country, ground'**. There is a standing ground upon which we can see Him, and that is as we stand on the Rock!

The root word for 'rock' that Mosheh would be put into, is the Hebrew word צור *tsur* – Strong's H6697 which means, **'rock, cliff, stones, strength, block of stone, boulder'**.

The use of this terminology is clear in declaring the manifestation of the esteem of Elohim, as seen through His Hand that covers us and secures us in Him, as we stand on Him, our Rock and Refuge, which is a clear reference and shadow picture of יהושע *Messiah*!

'The Rock' is הצור *'hatsur'*, and in the ancient pictographic script it looks like this:



Hey - ה:

This letter is used to express 'The', and the original pictograph for this letter is ה, which is a man standing with his arms raised out. The meaning of the letter ה is **'behold, look, breath, sigh and reveal or revelation'**, from the idea of revealing a great sight by pointing it out. It also carries for us the meaning of surrender as we lift up our hands and submit to יהוה as we lift our hands in praise, declaring His authority under which we humbly submit!

Tsadey - צ:

The Ancient picture for this letter is צ, which is **'a man on his side'**, and it can represent the act of lying on one's side in order to hunt or chase, when crouching in concealment, as well as **'laying one's self down for another'**. We can also see how this can represent that which comes forth from the side! This can also picture for us a fish hook, giving us the meaning of **'hunt or fish'**.

Waw/vav - ו:

The Ancient picture for this letter is ו, is pictured as a **peg** or **'tent peg'**, which was used for securing or tying the tent or other items. The possibility of it having a Y-shape is to show that it prevents the rope from slipping off. The root meaning of this letter is **'to add, secure or hook'**.

Resh – ר:

The Ancient picture for this letter is ר, **'the head of a man'**. This letter has the meanings of **'head or man'** as well as **'chief, top, beginning or first'**.

As we consider this word used in Scripture for **'The Rock'**, when looking at the ancient pictographic letters we are able to render the following meaning when understanding that this is a clear prophetic shadow picture of Messiah, The Rock in whom we find strength:

Behold, the One who shall lay down His life for us and secure for us the Covenant, is our Elohim and Head.

It is upon the Rock that the esteem is revealed!

When we consider this Hebrew word for 'esteem' - כבוד *kabod* – Strong's H3519 in the ancient script we gain further insight in the revelation of the esteem of יהוה.

In the ancient pictographic script the word כבוד *kabod* looks like this:



Kaph - כ:

The ancient form of this letter is כ - meaning **'the open palm of a hand'**. The meaning behind this letter is **'to bend and curve'** from the shape of a palm as well as **'to tame or subdue'** as one has been bent to another's will (under their hand), as an open hand symbolises submission. This also can picture for us a palm or palm branch from the curved palm shape. The hand also speaks of one's work, or under whose hand you submit and obey, and can also speak of a **covering, as in the covering of a hand**.

Beyt – ב:

The ancient script has this letter as ב, which pictures a tent floor plan and means, **'house'** or **'tent'**. It represents family and the importance of those who are inside the tent as opposed to the tent structure itself, and is the Dwelling Place of the Most High, which we are, as we are as living stones being built up in Messiah.

Waw – ו:

The ancient pictographic form of this letter is ו, which is a **peg** or **'tent peg'** or **nail**, which was used for securing or tying the tent or other items. The possibility of it having a Y-shape is to show that it prevents the rope from slipping off. The root meaning of this letter is **'to add, secure or hook'**.

Dalet – ד:

The ancient script has this letter as **ד** and is pictured as a **'tent door'**. It can also have the meaning of **'a back and forth movement'**, as one goes back and forth through a tent door, and so speaks of an access point. It can also carry the meaning of **'dangle'** or hanging as the tent door would hang from the roof pole of the tent. It speaks a great deal in terms of understanding the door of the tent of appointment as the only means of access.

When we look at these pictographic letters for **'esteem'** we are able to see some wonderful insight into the esteem of **יהוה** being revealed to us. The collective rendering of these pictographic letters can give us the meaning:

The covering of the House that has been secured and entrance given!

We also take note that we are able to recognise that the esteem we are to give to Elohim, and Elohim alone, is because He is the builder of the House! By His Hand He has built us and by His Mighty Saving Hand He has secured for us an entrance into His presence, as we are built up in Him who is greater than the House! For the builder of the House is greater than the House! We are the dwelling Place and He is the Master Builder who covers us as we take our stand upon Him, our Rock and Refuge!

As we consider the rendering of this word for **'esteem'** we are able to see from Scripture a clear revelation of the esteem of **יהוה** our Elohim, who physically came in the flesh and humbled Himself!

For more on this **'esteem of יהוה'**, please see the notes of the message called, **'The esteem of יהוה'**, on our site

(<http://atfotc.com>) under the **sermons 2015** menu or by simply clicking on the following link:

<http://atfotc.com/~atfotc/index.php/our-sermons/sermons-2015/616-the-esteem-of>

We therefore have been given the perfect pattern of humility and esteem through the life, death and resurrection of Messiah, and we would do well to walk in humility, for our Master and Elohim is coming for His ready Bride, who He will lift up!!!

Luqas/Luke 14:11 "For everyone who is exalting himself shall be humbled, and he who is humbling himself shall be exalted."

Yeshayahu/Isaiah 2:10-12 "Enter into the rock, and hide in the dust, because of the fear of יהוה and the splendour of His excellency. 11 The lofty looks of man shall be humbled, the pride of men shall be bowed down, and יהוה alone shall be exalted in that day. 12 For יהוה of hosts has a day against all that is proud and lofty, against all that is lifted up, so that it is brought low"

Yeshayahu/Isaiah 57:15 "For thus declares the high and exalted One who dwells forever, whose Name is set-apart, "I dwell in the high and set-apart place, with him who has a bruised and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of bruised ones."

As we consider the words of Shelomoh given to us in these powerful parables, may we certainly take heed to walk in the fear of **יהוה**, and walk humbly before Him, through the proper discipline of wisdom that causes us to be a faithful remnant Bride that prepares Herself for our soon coming Husband, Redeemer and King!

Verse 13:

"He who answers a matter before he hears it, it is folly and shame to him."

This parable is very straightforward and clear – answering a matter before you have even heard it is stupid! How can you give an answer to something that you have not even heard about? While we may ask this reasonable question we are able to clearly recognise that there are many who do this as they assume to have an answer for everything, even matters that they have not given an ear to!

This parable highlights for us an example of a foolish person who exhibits no self-control and gives their opinion before another can finish speaking. It is often due to anger that a person ends up speaking before a matter is fully heard, which in turn causes even more anger on the recipients and becomes a huge verbal battle that could have been avoided if each listened to the other.

Ya'aqob/James 1:19-20 "So then, my beloved brothers, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath, 20 for the wrath of man does not work the righteousness of Elohim."

Swift to hear and slow to speak! Ya'aqob makes it clear to us that if one is not swift to hear and slow to speak then it is most likely due to the wrath or anger of man that is the cause, and here he teaches us that this does not work proper righteousness at all! Matters must be fully heard before a proper and correct response can be given. We are told in:

Debarim/Deuteronomy 13:12-15 "When you hear someone in one of your cities, which יהוה your Elohim gives you to dwell in, saying, 13 'Some men, sons of Beliya'al, have gone out of you midst and led the inhabitants of their city astray, saying, "Let us go and serve other mighty ones" ' – mighty ones whom you have not known – 14 then you shall inquire, search out, and ask diligently. And see if the matter is true and established that this abomination was done in your midst, 15 you shall certainly smite the inhabitants of that city with the edge of the sword, putting it under the ban, and all that is in it and its livestock, with the edge of the sword."

While this is a clear instruction of what to do when it is heard that someone has gone astray in false worship, we are able to learn the clear principle of searching out a matter properly and diligently before executing proper right-ruling and righteousness!

Qoheleth/Ecclesiastes 5:2 “Do not be hasty with your mouth, and let not your heart hurry to bring forth a word before Elohim. For Elohim is in the heavens, and you on earth, therefore let your words be few.”

As we go through Scripture we learn that we are to make sure that the words we speak are worth being spoken and not be found speaking too quickly on any subject and find that we are put to shame for our silly hastiness!

Mishlĕ/Proverbs 17:28 “Even a fool keeping silence is regarded as wise, as understanding, when he closes his lips.”

Words that are spoken too quickly will bring shame! The Hebrew word for ‘shame’ is קִלְמָה kelimmah – Strong’s H3639 which means, ‘insult, reproach, disgrace, shame, humiliation’, and comes from the root verb קָלַם kalam – Strong’s H3637 which means, ‘to be humiliated, ashamed, brought to dishonour, disgraced, rebuked, embarrassed, insulted’.

While we may recognise the clear truth of this parable I think that most of us have, at some time in our lives, spoken too soon and ended up being embarrassed and ashamed. The simple lesson here is that this is what happens when you speak before listening!

The Hebrew word used here for ‘folly’ is the noun אִוְלֵת ivleth – Strong’s H200 which means, ‘folly, foolishness, foolish’, and is from the same adjective אִוִּיל evil – Strong’s H191 which means, ‘fool, foolish’.

The Hebrew words rendered **fool** in **Mishlĕ/Proverbs**, and often elsewhere in the Tanak, denote one who is morally deficient. Such a person is lacking in sense and is generally corrupt.

The אִוִּיל evil (fool) identifies himself as soon as he opens his mouth! He would be wise to conceal his folly by keeping quiet (**Mishlĕ/Proverbs 17:28**). When he starts talking without thinking, ruin is at hand (**Mishlĕ/Proverbs 10:14**). While a wise man avoids strife, the fool quarrels at any time (**Mishlĕ/Proverbs 20:3**). He cannot restrain himself and will “display his annoyance at once,” whereas a wise man overlooks an insult (**Mishlĕ/Proverbs 12:16**). Fools only have pride coming out of their mouths (**Mishlĕ/Proverbs 14:3**), and mock at sin and lawlessness (**Mishlĕ/Proverbs 14:9**).

A fool despises wisdom because it is too high for him (**Mishlĕ/Proverbs 24:7**), and when disputing with a fool there is no peace (**Mishlĕ/Proverbs 29:9**).

Verse 14:

“The spirit of a man sustains him in sickness, but who does bear a broken spirit?”

What is being contrasted here in this parable is one’s attitude! The Hebrew word for ‘spirit’ is רוּחַ ruah – Strong’s H7307 and means ‘breath, wind or spirit, mind’, and clearly refers to the life or breath that is in man. What Shelomoh is presenting to us here is the difference between a spirit of man that is able to sustain him in sickness versus a broken spirit that cannot! The basic idea of רוּחַ ruah – Strong’s H7307 is ‘air in motion’ and refers to the breath or life in living beings. Ultimately breath signifies activity and life. One’s “spirit” is consumed when he is sick or faint, but it comes back as a “second wind” and he “revives”. **Iyob/Job 12:10** tells us that the breath (רוּחַ ruah) of mankind is in the hand of יהוה.

The Hebrew word for ‘broken’ is נָקָה naka – Strong’s H5218 and comes from the verb that means, ‘to strike, scourge, smite’. The Hebrew root word used here for ‘sustains’ is כִּוַּל kul – Strong’s H3557 and means, ‘maintain, provide with sustenance’, and herein we are able to see the contrast between a spirit that is sustained versus a broken spirit!

This is a rhetorical question that is being presented here as the answer is clear in telling us that no one can bear a broken spirit.

Tehillah/Psalm 55:22 “Cast your burden on יהוה, and let Him sustain you; He never allows the righteous to be shaken.”

This is sure promise given to us and reminds us that we find our life (breath) in יהוה, and He is the One who sustains us on our sickbed! In speaking of the blessing of the one who considers the poor we are told in:

Tehillah/Psalm 41:3 “יהוה sustains him on his sickbed; in his weakness on his bed You bring a change.”

A broken spirit is a picture of one who has no hope and does not put their hope and trust in יהוה, while the one who does trust in יהוה will be sustained, as the breath of man is in יהוה Hand!

Verse 15:

“The heart of the understanding one gets knowledge, and the ear of the wise seeks knowledge.”

The Hebrew word that is used here for ‘heart’ is from the word לֵב leib - Strong’s H3820 which means, ‘heart, inner man, mind, will thought’.

It is a heart thing!!! A true understanding one gets knowledge, and is wise and shows that his heart is seeking the Truth!

The Hebrew word for ‘understanding’ is the word בִּינָן bin – Strong’s H995 meaning, ‘*to discern, act wisely, consider carefully, understand, perceive*’.

Mishlë/Proverbs 3:5 “**Trust in יהוה with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding**”.

We are to trust יהוה with all our heart, which entails trusting Him with all of the understanding and wisdom that is contained in His Word and not seek out our own vain and selfish reasonings. When our hearts and minds are filled with His Word and we meditate daily on His Torah, then our speech and actions will line up with the true plumb-line of His Word, enabling us to walk straight!

A fool does not delight in understanding but in uncovering his own heart, as discussed in **verse 2**.

The Hebrew word translated as ‘gets’ is קָנָה qena – Strong’s H7066 which means, ‘*to acquire, buy, purchase*’, and corresponds to the word קָנָה qanah – Strong’s H7069 which means, ‘*to acquire, buy, purchase, get, recover*’. We see this word being used in:

Mishlë/Proverbs 23:23 “**Buy the truth and do not sell it – Wisdom and discipline and understanding.**”

The instruction is clear – get wisdom! And what we must recognise here is that it will cost you!

Messiah has paid the cost for our deliverance, yet we must count the cost of following hard after Him and seeking Him with all our heart!

The Hebrew word used here for ‘wise’ is חָכָם hakam – Strong’s H2450 which means, ‘*expert, skilled, learned*’ and comes from the primitive root word חָכָם hakam – Strong’s H2449 meaning, ‘*to be wise, skilful, make wise*’. To be wise means to be one who is skilled or learned and this takes time, determination and discipline! The evidence of one being wise is seen in how one is increasing in their learning, as they give their ear – that is their full attention – to hearing proper instructions that are given from the Father and living as a taught one of the Master.

Mishlë/Proverbs 1:5 “**The wise one hears and increases learning, and the understanding one gets wise counsel**”

The Hebrew word for knowledge is דַּעַת da’ath – Strong’s H1847 and comes from the word used in Yeshayahu/Isaiah 6:9 for describing those who are ‘seeing’ but do not ‘know’, which is the Hebrew word - יָדָע yada – Strong’s H3045 meaning, ‘*to know*’.

As we meditate on the Torah, day and night, we are further equipped to guard the Word of Truth and the knowledge of the Set-Apart One! People who disregard the need to guard the knowledge by casting aside the Torah of Elohim can never be prosperous in the walk of set-apartness and will perish due to the lack of knowledge being carefully guarded in their mouths, for the Torah is to be in our hearts and mouths – to do it!

Hoshëa/Hosea 4:6 “**My people have perished for lack of knowledge. Because you have rejected knowledge, I reject you from being priest for Me. Since you have forgotten the Torah of your Elohim, I also forget your children.**”

We are to ‘guard’ knowledge and not ‘reject’ it! The Hebrew word for ‘rejected’ here in Hoshëa/Hosea is מָאַס mâ’as – Strong’s H3988 means, ‘*reject, completely abhor, despise, refuse, cast away*’. To reject יהוה’s Torah, His Laws and right-rulings takes a clear choice to despise and refuse to obey what has been commanded! Today so many have cast away His Torah as they render it null and void in their hearts and mouths and as a result they do not realise the consequences that this rejection of His laws will bring upon them, lest they repent.

Tehillah/Psalm 50:16-17 “**But to the wrong Elohim said, “What right have you to recite My laws, or take My covenant in your mouth, 17 “While you hated instruction and cast My Words behind you?”**

For more on the importance of not lacking a proper knowledge of Elohim please see the notes from a message called, “**Lack of knowledge leads to death – Ignorance is no excuse!**” which you can find on our site (<http://atfotc.com>) under the sermons 2015 menu or by clicking the following link:

<http://atfotc.com/index.php/our-sermons/sermons-2015/591-lack-of-knowledge-leads-to-death-ignorance-is-no-excuse>

As we consider all these Hebrew words contained in this parable we are able to clearly learn how important it is for us to get understanding and seek the knowledge of Elohim in order to grow in wisdom, as we seek first His Kingdom and His Righteousness! It is a heart thing!

It is a heart thing – and obedience flows from the heart, and in a Psalm that is all about the praise of the Torah and commands of Elohim we see Dawid saying in:

Tehillah/Psalm 119:111-112 “**Your witnesses are my inheritance forever, for they are the joy of my heart. 112 I have inclined my heart to do Your laws Forever, to the end.**”

Romiyim/Romans 6:17 “**But thanks to Elohim that you were servants of sin, yet you obeyed from the heart that form of teaching to which you were entrusted.**”

The Greek word for ‘heart’ is καρδία kardia – Strong’s G2588 and this word denotes the centre of all physical and spiritual life, and is understood as the centre and seat of the soul and mind; as it is the fountain and seat of the thoughts, passions, desires, appetites, affections, purposes, endeavours. It refers to the innermost part of a man – that which drives and directs a man’s steps, thoughts and purpose!

The Hebrew word for 'heart' is לֵב leḅ - Strong's H3820 is often written as לֵבָב leḅab – Strong's H3824 which also means, **'inner man, heart, mind, understanding'**; and what is interesting to take note of here is that these two letters for 'heart' in the ancient Hebrew pictographic Script make it clear that the rule and authority of Elohim is to be upon our hearts! In the ancient Script the Hebrew word לֵב leḅ - Strong's H3820 looks like this:



Lamed - ל:

The ancient script has this letter as ל, and is pictured as a **'shepherd's staff'**, can give the meaning of **'to or toward'** and can represent that which pushes or pulls a flock in a direction, and can speak of **authority** or a yoke that is used to lead and guide, as well as the ability to bring back by Authority.

Bet - ב:

The ancient script has this letter as ב, which pictures a tent floor plan and means, **'house'** or **'tent'**. It represents family and the importance of those who are inside the tent as opposed to the tent structure itself.

In terms of these two pictures representing the **'heart'** or the inner man and the will and thoughts of man, we are able to see that a pure heart is one that submits to the authority of the Good Shepherd, having been grafted into His Body, that is the Tabernacle of Elohim, which in Messiah we now are. And in recognising this we see that we, as legitimate sons and daughter of the Most High that have been grafted in by the Blood of Messiah, have upon our hearts His Torah, under which we submit to walking in – for His Torah are the rules of His House! Even with the word for heart being expressed as לֵבָב

leḅab, we are able to see in the ancient text a second 'bet' – ב – ב, showing us the clear picture of the True authority for both Houses of Yisra'el and Yehudāh, that collectively make up the entire body of Messiah, or Tabernacle of Elohim, which we now are!

Deḅarim/Deuteronomy 6:5-6 "And you shall love יהוה your Elohim with all your heart, and with all your being, and with all your might. 6 "And these Words which I am commanding you today shall be in your heart"

To love Elohim with all your heart implies that His commands are written upon your heart, for true love for Elohim is to guard His commands; and if one does not think upon or meditate upon His Torah in order to walk in it, then it shall be very clear that the Truth is not in them!

יהוה knows what is in our hearts, while we may not; and He tests our hearts in order to see if we will obey Him or not:

Deḅarim/Deuteronomy 8:2 "And you shall remember that יהוה your Elohim led you all the way these forty years in the wilderness, to humble you, prove you, to know what is in your heart, whether you guard His commands or not."

Deḅarim/Deuteronomy 10:12-13 "And now, Yisra'el, what is יהוה your Elohim asking of you, but to fear יהוה your Elohim, to walk in all His ways and to love Him, and to serve יהוה your Elohim with all your heart and with all your being, 13 to guard the commands of יהוה and His laws which I command you today for your good?"

Deḅarim/Deuteronomy 11:18 "And you shall lay up these Words of Mine in your heart and in your being, and shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes."

The reason I am quoting all these verses is to show that **'it is a heart thing'** and the Word must be in our hearts and mouths, and not just a vain rendering of a corrupted lips service that has no heart or follow through with obedience and submission to doing the commands with joy!

Verse 16:

"A man's gift makes room for him, and brings him before great men."

The Hebrew word that is used here for 'gift' is the word מַתָּן Mattan – Strong's H4976 which simply means, **'a gift'**, which comes from the root verb נָתַן Nathan – Strong's H5414 which means, **'to give, put, set, appointed, delivered, given, placed'**. It is from this word that we get the plural term נְתִינִים Nethinim which means, **'given ones'**. This teaches us a very vital lesson, as we consider here that the Lēwites were given as a gift, a gift for service to Aharon the high priest. This shadow pictures for us how we, as a called out, set-apart, chosen and royal priesthood, are the **'given ones'**, given as a gift – that is a gift for service unto our High Priest and King, יהושע Messiah!

The Hebrew word translated as **'makes room'** is רָחַב raḅab - Strong's H7337 which means, **'to be or grow wide or large, extend, make room, open wide'**, and what we take note of here is that as called out taught ones of Messiah we have been given the gift of abundant life in which we are able to properly express our love for Elohim in all we do, enabling us to come before anyone and be bold ambassadors of the Coming Reign!

A man's gift opens up the way for him to come before great men.

This saying could also be understood by some that it is by the gift of a man that he will gain access to influential men.

Some may interpret this 'gift' to be likened to a bribe as we take note that in the world it is often the case that some people are unable to come before bosses or leaders without some form of gift in their hand. While this principle may be true we are able to learn the lesson of how we too must have our gifts readily available at all times, so that we are able to come before others. This gift I am speaking of is the gift of the Set-Apart Spirit that is given to all who repent and are immersed in the Name of our Master and Elohim for the forgiveness of sins:

Ma'asei/Acts 2:38 **“And Kěpha said to them, “Repent, and let each one of you be immersed in the Name of יהושע Messiah for the forgiveness of sins. And you shall receive the gift of the Set-apart Spirit.”**

The gift of the Set-Apart Spirit is all we need to come before great men, for we do not need to worry about what we shall speak!

Marqos/Mark 13:11 **“And when they lead you away and deliver you up, do not worry beforehand what you are to say. But whatever is given you in that hour, speak that, for it is not you who are speaking, but the Set-apart Spirit.”**

Having received the gift of the Set-Apart Spirit, the true believer should not fear or be ashamed to come before great men!

Verse 17:

“The first to state his own case, seems right, until another comes and examines him.”

The context of this parable is a legal dispute where each party has a chance to present their case, and while the one who speaks first may seem to be right in what he says, it may be uncovered as not so when questioned by another!

The one who speaks first will seem right before any opposing views are given!

The Hebrew word translated as 'examines' is חָקַר *haqar* – Strong's H2713 which means, 'to search, examine, investigated, probe, make a search'. This parable can teach us a similar lesson to that which we see in **verse 13** where we learn that answering before hearing a matter can be folly to us, and here the one to speak first and present his argument may appear righteous until what he has said is examined and the matter which he spoke is searched out, as it may be revealed that what he has said is not right at all and through proper examination may be put to shame!

The Hebrew word translated in this parable for 'case' is רִיב *rib* – Strong's H7379 which means, 'strife, contention, dispute, adversary, controversy, case at law', and comes from the primitive root verb רִיב *rib* – Strong's H7378 meaning, 'to strive, contend, argue, complain, find fault, quarrel'. Recognising this root word that is used here we are able to see that Shelomoh is giving us a clear example of what happens when one comes to stir up strife and contention and is presented here as a court room scene where a law suit is being carried out between two parties and their respective witnesses. The Hebrew word that is used here for 'another' is רֵעַ *rea* – Strong's H7453 which means, 'friend, companion, fellow, opponent', and comes from the root רָעָה *ra'ah* – Strong's H7462 which means, 'to associate with, cultivate, companion'. What is clear here is that Shelomoh is presenting what will happen when there is a law suit between brothers or friends!

Qorintiyim Aleph/1 Corinthians 6:6-8 **“But brother against brother goes to be judged and that before unbelievers! 7 Already, then, there is a failure with you, that you have lawsuits among you. Why not rather be wronged? Why not rather be cheated? 8 But you yourselves do wrong and cheat, and that to your brothers!”**

The warning that is given in this parable is that when brothers engage in legal battles against one another it will bring hurt and harm, and Sha'ul makes an appeal to the believers in Corinth to not go to unbelievers to be judged, and rather be wronged in order to properly win back a brother!

With the words of Shelomoh we are able to see that he is presenting us a parable of one who is making a case against another and this simply opens up a door of contention and strife through cross examinations that will go back and forth, and teaches us that whatever we speak we would do well to always have our story straight and have all the Truth of the matter properly searched out before we speak and find that through cross examination we were wrong!

This parable simply exhorts us to exercise caution in a lawsuit or case against a brother, and while we certainly realise that there are times that matters need to be settled before a proper panel of witnesses and authority we would do well to make sure that if we have a case to present that we should also be prepared to be cross examined and not bear false witness!

Verse 18:

“The lot settles disputes, and separates between the mighty.”

The Hebrew word used here for 'lot' is the word גּוֹרָל *goral* – Strong's H1486 which means, 'a lot, allotted, choice, territory allotted', which is used 77 times in Scripture with the majority of these being used in Yehoshua/Joshua in giving us the various tribal allotments.

Lots were used to decide on issues and settle disputes and we are told in:

Mishlě/Proverbs 16:33 **“The lot is cast into the lap, but every decision by it is from יהוה.”**

What we are able to clearly recognise is that the final and true decision over any matter settled by lot is from יהוה!

The Hebrew word that is translated as ‘settles’ is from the root verb שָׁבַת *shabath* – Strong’s H7673 which means, ‘**to cease, desist, rest, observe, observe the rest, put an end**’ and it is written in the ‘hifil tense’, which is the causative action of the ‘qal tense’, which can be rendered as, ‘**to put an end to, to exterminate, destroy, to cause to desist from**’, and so here we are able to determine what puts an end to any disputes. A lot brings rest to a dispute!

The Hebrew word that is translated as ‘disputes’ is מִדְּיָנִים – ‘*midyaniym*’ which is the plural of the root word מָדוֹן *madon* – Strong’s H4066 which means, ‘**strife, contention**’, and it is from this word that we get the term – the Midyanites – **הַמִּדְּיָנִים** ‘**the (ha) Midyanites**’ from Strong’s H4084, and so we can understand that the Midyanites were a people of ‘**strife**’.

The inheritance of each tribal allotment was done by lot so as to put a quick end to any disputes over land issues and quickly separate even the mighty who may have tried to get their way through force.

The yes-or-no decision given by lots helped avoid an ongoing conflict or litigation between **strong opponents**.

The lot, when properly used, was a sure means of bringing an end to any disputes and to prevent any unnecessary quarrels. Kena’an was distributed by lot. The Scriptures don’t tell us how the lots were cast, and it was used in almost all the varied affairs of life. Magistrates and priests were appointed by it, and the land of conquered enemies was distributed by it, the scapegoat was selected by it and lots were often cast to determine who had transgressed in a matter.

In Ma’asei/Acts 1 we are also able to see that it was by lot that Mattithyahu was chosen to replace Yehudah who had betrayed Messiah.

However lots were cast, be it with stones, pieces of wood or by using any other materials what we are able to recognise is that when a lot was cast in proper manner with reverence for Elohim, the decision by it came from Elohim!

The custom of deciding questions by lot is found in antiquity; both by Yisra’el and Yehudah as well as those from among the nations as they would make an appeal to the Almighty through various lots to decide a decision. What they were not used for is to divine the future.

Every decision is by יְהוָה, as we are told in **Mishlê/Proverbs 16:33!** The Hebrew word for ‘**decision**’ is מִשְׁפָּט *mishpat* – Strong’s H4941 – ‘**judgement, ordinance, regulations**’ and comes from the word שָׁפַט *shaphat* – Strong’s H8199 – meaning, ‘**to judge, govern, rule, pronounce judgement, give law**’.

Every judgement and right-ruling is from יְהוָה!!!

One question that is frequently asked is whether this practice of casting lots should still be done today, and in order to answer that we must ask ourselves what the purpose of the lot was. The lot was used to settle any decision that needed to be made and while nations that did not worship יְהוָה also used the practice of casting lots we must bear in mind that from a Scriptural perspective the correct casting of lots done by faithful believers was instructed by and decided by יְהוָה.

The lot is not a tool of chance, nor is it a tool for divination but was something that was clearly directed by יְהוָה, in order to settle any matter that was being disputed over or in regards to allotment of inheritance or choice of an individual!

I firmly believe that the lots was used by believers after much prayer and seeking the will of Elohim, and what we must take note of today is that we have the Word of Elohim available to us, not to use as a lottery for decisions but to use as a proper tool for seeking the will of our Master and Elohim, through proper meditation and study of His Word, under the guidance of His Spirit that works in us, for in Messiah we live and move and are, and having given His Spirit into our hearts as a pledge of our inheritance we are equipped to seek the Truth within His word and along with proper prayer and study and seeking of wisdom. When we are transformed by the renewing of our minds we shall be able to prove what that good and well-pleasing and perfect desire of Elohim is!!!

Verse 19:

“A brother transgressed against is a strong city, and contentions are like the bars of a citadel.”

This parable teaches us how hard it is to reach a brother that has been offended in any way. When one has been hurt and transgressed against the initial response is usually one of defence and the putting up of string walls so that the offender is unable to reconcile and make amends as the one offended shuts himself up and away from the one who hurt him!

The Hebrew root word that is used for ‘**transgressed**’ is פָּשָׁע *pasha* – Strong’s H6586 which means, ‘**transgress, to be in rebellion, revolt, offend**’, and is written in the ‘niphil tense’ which can be understood as, ‘**to be rebelled against**’, as this niphil tense is the passive tense and highlights to us that the brother that has been transgressed against was passive in the whole matter and was offended, possibly without cause! Often when people are extremely hurt by others, and they did nothing to cause the offense or hurt to come their way, they will close up and cut off any communication with the offender! Shelomoh is teaching us a very real fact of life in regards to the response of the human flesh – get offended and you become like a city that cannot be entered into in any way!

An offended brother keeps everyone away! We have seen some who get offended by a matter and withdraw from fellowship and are never seen again. They will not respond to any form of communication from others within the fellowship and simply ignore and cut off all communication with those that they once walked in unity with.

Whether the offense or transgression received was intended or not, or whether it is a valid offense or not, what we are able to realise is that it is real to the one who becomes offended, and many today take offense at things they shouldn't yet do and as a result close themselves off and withdraw! While we may all agree that it should be this way we can learn from this parable how real and damaging an offended brother can be to the rest of the body.

Shelomoh also tells us that contentions puts barriers between people. The Hebrew word used here for contentions is **מָדוֹן** **madon** – Strong's H4066 which means, '**strife, contention**', as discussed in the last verse. When contention and strife is likened to the bars of a citadel we are able to recognise how destructive strife can be!

Quarrelling sets up barriers between people so that they do not have access to each other, as disputes are as tough as the bars of a castle – they cannot be taken down!

Give no room to strife and put an end to it is the call for us today!

Titus/Titus 3:9 "**But keep away from foolish questions, and genealogies, and strife and quarrels about the Torah, for they are unprofitable and useless.**"

We would do well to heed this instruction – stay away from strife and quarrels about the Torah! The enemy is always seeking an opportunity to get us into a heated debate and argument over matters of the Torah; and while we are to certainly proclaim the Truth and defend it and guard it by doing it, we must be careful not to fall into useless arguments that just cause strife, which many who refuse to hear the Truth want to do! Give no room for strife!

Sha'ul tells Timotiyos where strife comes from – it comes from verbal battles – and in speaking of one who teaches falsely he says in:

Timotiyos Aleph/1 Timothy 3:9 "**he is puffed up, understanding none at all, but is sick about questionings and verbal battles from which come envy, strife, slander, wicked suspicions**"

We must steer clear of 'verbal battles' that lead to strife, slander and all forms of wickedness.

In **Mishlĕ/Proverbs 16** we are told that one of the things that are an abomination to **יְהוָה** is '**one who causes strife among brothers**'!

Strife comes as a result of not having what one wants, and because one does not ask, or if they do, they ask with wrong motives! **Mishlĕ/Proverbs 15:18** tells us that a man of wrath stirs up strife, but he who is patient appeases strife. How often do you find yourself lacking patience and end up stirring up strife and contentions among others because you did not get your way? **Mishlĕ/Proverbs 17:14** tells us that the beginning of strife is like releasing water, and we must therefore put a stop to any fighting before it bursts out. Often strife starts out very subtly and if not stopped will become a raging torrent of destruction and separation, which we must guard against at all costs! Don't let your bitterness be released like a slow running tap... before you know it there is a huge flood of emotions that cannot be contained, bringing unnecessary damage! If you find that you have strife stirring up inside you because you did not get your way, and your water has become soiled and muddied so to speak, and then do this... "**Switch off the tap, get your leak fixed and start giving out living water again**"!

One who causes strife and divisions is an abomination to **יְהוָה**, and will not be welcomed into His House.

We could expand for hours on this single topic of strife, for it is one of the most dangerous things in the body, as it breaks down instead of building up, and unless **יְהוָה** builds the House, the labourers labour in vain!

This parable is a severe warning against strife and the damaging effects thereof!

Verse 20:

"A man's stomach is satisfied from the fruit of his mouth; he is satisfied with the increase of his lips."

The Hebrew literally renders the ordering of this verse as follows:

"From the fruit of a man's mouth his stomach is satisfied; with the increase of his lips he is satisfied"

What Shelomoh is telling us here is that the fruit of a man's mouth satisfies his stomach, and the Hebrew word for 'stomach' is **בֶּטֶן** **beten** – Strong's H990 which means, '**belly, body, womb, stomach, inward parts**', and is translated as 'heart' in **verse 8**. The basic meaning of this word is simply 'interior' and in Hebrew denotes the 'lower abdomen'. It can refer to a woman's womb, or to the stomach, or be used in a figurative sense to express man's physical nature. It is used several times in Scripture to express the deepest recesses of the person, and/or the seat of the desires.

The Hebrew word for fruit is **פֵּרִי** **peri** – Strong's H6529 which means, '**fruit, produce**' and comes from the word **פָּרָה** **parah** – Strong's H6509 which means, '**to bear fruit, be fruitful, flourish**'. This word certainly speaks of the physical fruit of trees and shrubs that bear fruit in which there is a seed according to its kind, i.e., fruit with kernels, hence the fruit produces more fruit. This word also is used figuratively of children, as being the fruit of the womb; yet what we also find as a repeated theme throughout Scripture, is that this term for fruit many times refers to the meaning of, "**the result of an action**"; or better understood as, "**works**". Our lives, as set-apart children of Elohim, ought to be bearing the fruit of repentance – which is a clear resulting action of turning away from all falsehood and wickedness, and turning to righteousness:

Mattithyahu/Matthew 3:8 “Bear, therefore, fruits worthy of repentance”

Understanding that fruits are the result of an action, we must also take heed that we do not bear bad fruit, which may be brought forth as a result of wrong actions, such as disobedience or compromise or lawlessness and unrighteousness! When we walk according to the Spirit we will bear the fruit of the Spirit and not be given over to the desires of the flesh and have the fruit of fleshly living present! Fruit does not just pop into one’s life, it is a result of an action, and we are to be bearing good fruit, hence the clear understanding that we are to be ‘doing’ the good works of obedience that have been prepared beforehand for us to do – and that is to walk in the clear commands of Elohim, guarding to do all He has commanded us!

We are known, or rather shall be known by our fruit:

Mattithyahu/Matthew 7:16-23 “By their fruits you shall know them. Are grapes gathered from thornbushes or figs from thistles? 17 “So every good tree yields good fruit, but a rotten tree yields wicked fruit. 18 “A good tree is unable to yield wicked fruit, and a rotten tree to yield good fruit. 19 “Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. 20 “So then, by their fruits you shall know them – 21 “Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Master, Master,’ shall enter into the reign of the heavens, but he who is doing the desire of My Father in the heavens. 22 “Many shall say to Me in that day, ‘Master, Master, have we not prophesied in Your Name, and cast out demons in Your Name, and done many mighty works in Your Name?’ 23 “And then I shall declare to them, ‘I never knew you, depart from Me, you who work lawlessness!’”

Many mighty works that many will claim as good works will be simply revealed as wicked works or rather wicked fruits, for wicked fruit is brought forth from the resulting actions of lawlessness, whereas the good fruit of righteousness is brought forth from the resulting action of complete obedience and set-apartness of walking in and staying in the commands of Elohim!

As the value of a tree is estimated by its products, so righteousness that is displayed in acts/works is a decisive standard for the just judgment of Elohim:

Mattithyahu/Matthew 3:10 “And the axe is already laid to the root of the trees. Every tree, then, which does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.”

The one who is unfruitful has been clearly warned of being rejected, and if this warning is not taken heed of, the clear sentence of being cut off is clear:

Luqas/Luke 13:6-9 “And He spoke this parable, “A certain man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard, and he came seeking fruit on it and found none. 7 “And he said to the gardener, ‘Look, for three years I have come seeking fruit on this fig tree and find none. Cut it down, why does it even make the ground useless?’ 8 “And he answering, said to him, ‘Master, leave it this year too, until I dig around it and throw manure. 9 ‘And if indeed it bears fruit, good. But if not so, you shall cut it down.’”

When we remain steadfast in walking in complete obedience to the Torah/instructions/commands of our Master and Elohim, we are guaranteed that we shall bear fruit that lasts!

The Hebrew word used here for ‘satisfied’ is שָׂבַע *saba* – Strong’s H7646 meaning, ‘*to be satisfied*’, and a derivative of this word is שָׂבַע *sabea* – Strong’s H7649 which means, ‘*satisfied, full, ripe*’ and by implication can mean, ‘*satisfied by nourishment*’.

We know that יהוה satisfies our desires with good things and He satisfies His people with bread – which is symbolic of His Word that satisfies!

Tehillah/Psalm 132:15 “I greatly bless her provision, I satisfy her poor with bread.”

Tehillah/Psalm 147:14 “Who makes peace in your borders, He satisfies you with the finest wheat”

Tehillah/Psalm 22:26 “The meek ones do eat and are satisfied; let those who seek Him praise יהוה. Let your heart live forever!”

In these verses from Tehillim/Psalms we take note that one’s satisfaction is repeatedly linked with food and what one eats, and when Shelomoh teaches us that a man’s stomach is satisfied by the fruit of his mouth we must take note of how important our ‘spiritual diets’ are so to speak.

Debarim/Deuteronomy 8:3 “And He humbled you, and let you suffer hunger, and fed you with manna which you did not know nor did your fathers know, to make you know that man does not live by bread alone, but by every Word that comes from the mouth of יהוה.”

He brought Yisra’el to a place of hunger and thirst and need – and He supplied their needs!!! The test would be whether they would truly hunger and thirst for righteousness or not!

Mattithyahu/Matthew 5:6 “Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, because they shall be filled.”

They were fed with manna – a food that they nor their fathers had known; and what we see happening in these days is this cycle of events happening again; as יהוה has delivered us from bondage to the enslavement of man-made traditions and dogmas and the commands of men that we had been taught, he has led us out and brought us to a place of hunger – and He has given us food that we had not known before under the veil of deceit and lies.

We are eating of His Good Bread – His Truth is being fed to us in our Wilderness sojourning, and this pure Truth that we are ‘eating’ today our fathers never knew; and we are learning more and more that we cannot live without His Bread from Heaven – we cannot live without יהושע Messiah, for He is the Bread of Life!

We cannot live on bread alone – but by EVERY Word that comes from the mouth of יהוה. Those who claim that the Torah and Prophets and Writings of the Tanak (O.T.) are not applicable have sadly missed this very vital truth – we live by EVERY Word that comes from the mouth of יהוה – His Torah is life-giving Bread for us and Messiah is The Word of יהוה made flesh. To reject His Torah is to reject His Bread and that is to reject His salvation and deliverance for us through the Life, death and resurrection of Messiah.

We need our daily bread, and when Shelomoh makes it clear that a man’s stomach is satisfied by the fruit of his mouth, the question becomes abundantly clear, and that is, “What food is satisfying you?”

What are you eating? May are not ‘eating’ the Bread of Life and refuse to meditate day and night on the Torah as they are being satisfied with other food, that of the world, which causes them to ‘be satisfied’ and see no need for the true manna of the Truth!

The fruit of one’s mouth can refer to one’s speech and it is by one’s speech that we are able to determine what one is being satisfied with.

Eph’siyim/Ephesians 4:29 “Let no corrupt word come out of your mouth, but only such as is good for the use of building up, so as to impart what is pleasant to the hearers.”

Qolasim/Colossians 3:8 “But now, also put off all these: displeasure, wrath, evil, blasphemy, filthy talk from your mouth.”

Qolasim/Colossians 4:6 “Let your word always be with favour, seasoned with salt, so that you know how you ought to answer each one.”

Mattithyahu/Matthew 12:35-37 “The good man brings forth what is good from the good treasures of his heart, and the wicked man brings forth what is wicked from the wicked treasure. 36 “And I say to you that for every idle word men speak, they shall give an account of it in the Day of Judgment. 37 “For by your words you shall be declared righteous, and by your words you shall be declared unrighteous.”

Verse 21:

“Death and life are in the power of the tongue, and those loving it eat its fruit.”

Shelomoh continues to highlight the power of the fruit of one’s mouth and here he further emphasises the power of one’s words, as word of both life and death are in the power of the tongue.

The Hebrew wording is literally, **“Death and life and in the hand of the tongue...”** where the ‘hand’ is an image or idiom representing power. This is repeating the clear idea that is expressed in the previous verse, which further teaches us that the words we speak have consequences and may be life or death to another!

‘**Those loving it**’ is a clear reference to those who love to talk and express their opinions, whether others would like to hear them or not, and to ‘**eat its fruit**’ shows us that those who love to talk will pay a price for their abundant talking and be faced with the consequences of what they say!

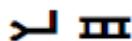
While the second part does not say whether the fruit is good or bad, we take note that it seems to lead us to be taught to be on guard against speaking death, for we will bear the consequences of negative talk, and can be recognised as a warning against ‘deathly talk’!

The Hebrew word for ‘**death**’ is מָוֶת **maveth** – Strong’s H4194 which means, ‘**death, plague**’ and comes from the root verb מוּת **muth** – Strong’s H4191 which means, ‘**to die, bring about my death, put to death**’.

In Hebrew the word for ‘**life**’ is חַיִּים **hay** – Strong’s H2416 and means, ‘**life, alive, living, flowing, fresh, running**’.

יהושע is The Living Torah and our source of Life, or rather He is the Life of the Torah - and when we drink of Him – the FOUNTAIN OF LIFE begins to flow out of us as we gain understanding, and walk in the fear of יהוה by walking in the Torah, and our speech becomes a flowing source of life!!!

In the ancient pictographic symbols of this word, we are given a greater insight in understanding how יהושע Messiah is THE LIFE! This word - חַיִּים in the ancient script look like this:



חַיִּים – חַי

The ancient script has this letter as חַי which is a ‘**tent wall**’, and carries a meaning of ‘**separation**’, as a tent wall separates two halves of the tent; or it can also reflect the outside walls that separate the people inside from that which is outside and so can also symbolise protection and security to those inside, while picturing a cutting off of those who are

outside. Hence this letter can mean **‘established, secure’** as well as **‘cut off, separated from’**. As a tent wall we are also able to recognise the picture of stones being built up to make a complete wall.

Yod – י

The ancient script has this letter as י which is **‘an arm and hand’** and carries the meaning of **‘work, make, throw’**, from the primary functions of the arm and hand, and it also represents worship or giving thanks in the extending of hands as a gesture of this. The work of one’s hands is the basic meaning of this letter!

From this ancient pictographic lettering of the word for **LIFE** we are clearly able to see how by the work of Messiah – the outstretched arm and hand of Elohim, we as living stones, are built up in Him as the Dwelling Place of the Living Elohim!

Our tongue should be speaking life and not death, and when understanding that the word that is translated as **‘power’** is the Hebrew word יָדַד **yad** – **Strong’s H3027** and is a primitive root which is translated as, **‘hand, command, authority, power, tenons, side’**, and the primary meaning of this noun is **“the terminal part of the arm used to perform the functions of a man’s will.”**

We are therefore able to understand, in the Hebraic mind-set, that one’s hand symbolises what one does or one’s ‘works’. The Hebrew root word translated as **‘tongue’** is לָשׁוֹן **lashon** – **Strong’s H3956** which means, **‘tongue, language, tongue shaped’**, and the Greek word for **‘tongue’** is γλῶσσα **glōssa** – **Strong’s G1100** and we take note of what Ya’aqob teaches us in regards to the tongue and its power:

Ya’aqob/James 3:5-12 **“So too the tongue is a little member, yet boasts greatly. See how a little fire kindles a great forest! 6 And the tongue is a fire, the world of unrighteousness. Among our members the tongue is set, the one defiling the entire body, and setting on fire the wheel of life, and it is set on fire by Gehenna. 7 For every kind of beast and bird, of reptile and creature of the sea, is tamed and has been tamed by mankind. 8 But no man is able to tame the tongue. It is unruly, evil, filled with deadly poison. 9 With it we bless our Elohim and Father, and with it we curse men, who have been made in the likeness of Elohim. 10 Out of the same mouth proceed blessing and cursing. My brothers, this should not be so. 11 Does the fountain send forth the sweet and the bitter from the same opening? 12 My brothers, is a fig tree able to bear olives, or a grapevine figs? So neither is a fountain able to make salt and sweet water.”**

This passage echoes the clear warning that Shelomoh is giving us here in his parables of wisdom, and that is that the tongue is very powerful and can cause a lot to happen, good or bad. Ya’aqob reinforces to us as believers that we must learn to tame the tongue and makes sure that the words that come forth from our mouth are the sweet words of life and not the bitter words of death!

Dawiḏ asks יְהוָה to set a guard over his mouth, in:

Tehillah/Psalm 141:3-4 **“יְהוָה, set a guard for my mouth; watch over the door of my lips. 4 Let not my heart be inclined to evil, to practise deeds of wrongness with men working wickedness, and let me not eat of their delicacies.”**

Dawiḏ understood how the tongue is linked to deeds and asks Elohim to set a guard over his mouth in order that he does not eat, speak or do that which is wrong!

Qolasim/Colossians 3:16-17 **“Let the Word of Messiah dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing with pleasure in your hearts to the Master in psalms and songs of praise and spiritual songs. 17 And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the Name of the Master יְהוֹשֻׁעַ, giving thanks to Elohim the Father through Him.”**

Verse 22:

“He who has found a wife has found good, and receives favour from יְהוָה.”

The closing three verses of **Mishlê/Proverbs 18** speak about the importance of having reliable and meaningful relationships through marriage, wealth and friendship. This verse clearly speaks about marriage and the blessing of finding a wife in order to become as one, picturing the mystery of the marriage of our Master and Elohim and us His Bride!

The Hebrew root word translated as **‘found’** is מָצָא **matsa** – **Strong’s H4672** – **‘to attain, find, locate, discover’**. This verse does not use **‘found’** in the sense that a wife has been lost but that she has been met and married. The Hebrew word for **‘wife’** is אִשָּׁה **ishshah** – **Strong’s H802** which means, **‘woman, wife, female’**, and is depicted in Scripture as the physical counterpart of man, who is deserving of his unswerving loyalty. He who has found a wife has found **‘good’**!

The Hebrew word for **‘good’** is טוֹב **tob** – **Strong’s H2896** and carries the meaning, **‘pleasant, good, agreeable, beautiful, to be pleasing, done well’**. In the true understanding of this word טוֹב **tob** we can see that it may best be translated in most cases as **‘functional’**, for when יְהוָה said in **Berēshith/Genesis 1:31** that when He saw all that He had made, that He said it was very **good**. What He saw was His creation **functioning** properly and working the way it should and this is why it was **‘good’**.

Sounds all good – yet as we study further into the Hebraic mind-set in regards to this word we get a fuller understanding of what טוב **tob** means. To do that it does help to look at the ancient script and get a wider perspective of the true meaning of this word.

In the ancient script - טוב **tob** - is pictured as:



Tet – ט:

The original pictograph for this letter is ☒, a container made of wicker or clay. Containers were a very important item among the nomadic Hebrews. They were used for storing grains and other items. Wicker baskets were used as nets for catching fish. The meanings of this letter are basket, contain, store and clay.

Waw - װ:

The ancient pictographic form of this letter is Y, a peg or 'tent peg', which was used for securing or tying the tent or other items. The possibility of it having a Y-shape is to show that it prevents the rope from slipping off. The root meaning of this letter is 'to add, secure or hook'.

Beyt - ב:

The ancient script has this letter as ☐, which pictures a tent floor plan and means, 'house' or 'tent'. It represents family and the importance of those who are inside the tent as opposed to the tent structure itself.

טוב **tob** - ☐ װ ☒ - we see that we as clay vessels are made secure through the Blood of Messiah that holds for us a secure covenant promise of being made complete in Him and becoming the Dwelling Place of the Most High – where He that is Good - The Potter - may dwell with those He created and called by name!

As we look at these letters we find a great revelation in terms of the Good News (Besorah) or rather 'טוב **tob** News'! The way we, as 'clay vessels', are secured into the House of Elohim is by being secured by the peg! Listen to what it says in: **Yeshayahu/Isaiah 22:22-24** "And I shall place the key of the house of Dawid on his shoulder. And he shall open, and no one shuts; and shall shut, and no one opens. 23 'And I shall fasten him like a peg in a steadfast place, and he shall become a throne of esteem to his father's house. 24 'And they shall hang on him all the weight of his father's house, the offspring and the offshoots, all vessels of small quantity, from the cups to all the jars."

We know that this is a great picture of how through יהושע Messiah we are fastened in a steadfast place!

Ezra 9:8 "But now, for a short while, favour has been shown from יהוה our Elohim, to leave us a remnant to escape, and to give us a peg in His set-apart place, that our Elohim might enlighten our eyes and give us a little reviving in our bondage."

This again is a wonderful promise given amidst a time of bondage due – that a peg is given in His set-apart place – a great picture of the loving-commitment and compassion יהוה has for His called out nation, that while the 'House of Elohim' had been neglected and broken down He would bring the necessary means to 'secure' His covenanted people to His House that he builds by His design! It is through the work of Messiah, who has become the very 'peg' that secures us and adds us, the clay vessels, to His House!

The Word of Elohim made flesh – The Living Torah, יהושע Messiah came down and secured for us the ability to be made into the House that He Elohim shall dwell in forever!

His House/Dwelling Place is built by His design and His plan and so when we see how that we are the 'Dwelling Place' of the Most High, then we are able to get a clearer understanding that we are built up according to His plans as instructed in His Torah that was given through Mosheh and revealed in the life, death and resurrection of Messiah. Just as the Tabernacle in the Wilderness had to be built exactly according to the pattern shown to Mosheh on the mountain of the true heavenly Tabernacle, so too do we need to recognise that the only way we can be built up into being the True Dwelling Place of Elohim is through carefully following His instructions as we walk in and stay in Messiah – The Living Torah.

When something is working properly we might say today something like, '*working like a well-oiled machine*', when speaking of that which is functioning the way it should and the way it was designed to. So טוב **tob** in the true sense of the word, expresses the idea that something is 'good' when it is fulfilling the action for which a person or thing is specifically fitted or used, or for which something exists. In other words it refers to something that functions within its intended purpose!

The opposite of טוב **tob** (good) is evil which is Hebrew is רע **ra** – Strong's H7451 meaning, '*bad, evil, wicked, harmful*'.

The tree of knowledge in the garden was of טוב **tob** (good) and רע **ra** (evil)!

Just as we understand that טוב **toḅ** represents that which is ‘functional’, we can then see that רע **ra** represents that which is ‘dysfunctional’, which simply put speaks of that which reveals and abnormal and unhealthy lifestyle that is not functioning as it should.

We may often think something is good, yet if it is not ‘functional’ according to the plumb line of the Torah of יהוה, then we had best be careful to consider our steps!

It is a functional and good design of our Master and Elohim for a man to find a wife and become as one together, for when this happens he receives favour from יהוה.

The Hebrew word used for ‘favour’ is the word רצון **ratson** – Strong’s H7522 which means, ‘*goodwill, favour, acceptance, desired, well-pleased*’, and comes from the primitive root verb רצה **ratsah** – Strong’s H7521 which means, ‘*to be pleased with, accept favourably*’. This does not say that if a man finds a wife then he will receive favour or be able to obtain favour from יהוה but rather that in finding a wife he has already been favoured by יהוה, and shows that He has been good to you as the wife of a man is a gift from יהוה.

Verse 23:

“The poor speaks beseechingly, but the rich answers fiercely.”

This verse contrasts the behaviour of the poor and the rich.

The Hebrew word used here for ‘poor’ comes from the root verb רש **rush (roosh)** – Strong’s H7326 which means, ‘*to be in want or poor, destitute, poor man, needy, one who pretends to be poor*’.

The Hebrew word that is translated here as ‘beseechingly’ is תַּחֲנוּן **taḥanun** – Strong’s H8469 which means, ‘*supplication for favour*’. What Shelomoh is showing us here is that the destitute asks the rich for favour and the rich answers fiercely!

The Hebrew root word used here for ‘fiercely’ is the word אַז **az** – Strong’s H5794 which means, ‘*strong, mighty, fierce, power*’ as well as meaning, ‘*raging, insolent, greedy*’. The rich or wealthy answers the poor roughly, and speaks in an impolite and rude manner. This parable could be understood as saying that the poor speaks with urgent pleas while the rich answers with harshness!

This parable is a clear warning against the rich who are often too high minded to care for anyone that makes a plea for help.

Take a look at what Sha’ul told Timotiyos in:

Timotiyos Aleph/1 Timothy 6:17-19 “Charge those who are rich in this present age not to be high-minded, nor to trust in the uncertainty of riches, but in the living Elohim, who gives us richly all for enjoyment, 18 to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous, ready to share, 19 storing up for themselves a good foundation for the time to come, so that they lay hold on everlasting life.”

What this parable of Shelomoh warns us against is the danger of what riches can do if not properly administered as a good steward of Elohim. The only reason that a rich man would answer a poor man fiercely is because he has put his trust in his own wealth and has forgotten that it is Elohim who gives the power to get wealth.

This parable is a reminder for us to take care of our brothers in need when it is the power of our hands to do so.

Ya’aqob/James 2:15-16 “And if a brother or sister is naked and in need of daily food, 16 but one of you says to them, “Go in peace, be warmed and be filled,” but you do not give them the bodily needs, what use is it?”

This is a warning against selfishness and not hearing the earnest plea from a poor brother or sister!

This second of the last three parables in **Mishlê/Proverbs 18** deals with how one handles wealth, and how one responds to the earnest supplications of a brother that is in need, especially when it is within your power and hand to help.

Verse 24:

“A man of many friends might come to ruin, but there is a loving one who sticks closer than a brother!”

There are ‘friends’ who simply pretend to be friends!!! One does not have to look too far to recognise the reality of this, especially as we see social media increasing by the day where various programmes can allow one to have hundreds or even thousands of so called ‘friends’ who they have never actually met in person. Many who spend their days on line in various chat rooms and social media platforms are often more alone that they would care to realise, for when it comes to the times when they really need a close friend none of the online pals are available to be what a true friend should be!

The Hebrew word that is used here for ‘friends’ is רֵעִים – ‘**reaiym**’ which is the plural of the word רֵעַ **rea** – Strong’s H7453 which means, ‘*friend, companion, fellow, opponent*’, and comes from the root רָעָה **ra’ah** – Strong’s H7462 which means, ‘*to associate with, cultivate, companion*’.

The Hebrew word translated as 'ruin' is רָעָה *raa* – Strong's H7489 which means, **'to be evil, bad, act wickedly, practice evil, work calamity, do harm, be displeasing'**.

The Hebrew word that is translated as 'a loving one' is from the root verb אָהַב *ahab* – Strong's H157 meaning, **'to love, dearly loved, friend, friends, lover'**, and is an expression of choice in action rather than just an emotional feeling! The loving one acts out of a loving choice as opposed to the many who claim to be friends yet are not there when it is needed most! The Hebrew word translated as 'sticks' is from the primitive root word דָּבַק *dabaq* – Strong's H1692 and means, **'to cling, cleave, keep close, closely pursued, fasten its grip, joined, remained steadfast'**.

What Shelomoh is telling us here is that while many friends may actually be the ruin of a person, having one true friend who clings to you is more valuable than the many superficial companions that will most probably run away when a clinging is called for! It is better to have one true friend than many unreliable companions!

This parable is also a great prophetic shadow picture of Messiah who is The Loving One who sticks closer than a brother who calls us His friends!!!

Yoḥanan/John 15:13-15 **"No one has greater love than this: that one should lay down his life for his friends. 14 "You are My friends if you do whatever I command you. 15 "No longer do I call you servants, for a servant does not know what his master is doing. But I have called you friends, for all teachings which I heard from My Father I have made known to you."**

Mishlê/Proverbs 17:17 **"A friend loves at all times, and a brother is born for adversity."**

The Hebrew word used here for 'friend' is רֵעַ *rea* – Strong's H7453 which means, **'friend, companion, fellow, brother, intimate friend'**, and comes from the root רָאָה *ra'ah* – Strong's H7462 which means, **'to associate with, cultivate, companion'**. The Hebrew word translated as 'loves' is the root verb אָהַב *ahab* – Strong's H157 meaning, **'to love, dearly loved, friend, friends, lover'**, and is an expression of choice in action rather than just an emotional feeling!

Shelomoh is making it clear that the true quality of a true friend is one of continual love, and many commentators believe that Shelomoh is not contrasting a friend and brother but that he is making them equivalents. This teaches us that a true friend that loves at all times is like a brother that is bond for adversity, saying that a true brother is faithful during times of calamity, trials and trouble. The friend who has no birth connections loves at all times, while the brother, because of family connections, is faithful in times of trials. While brothers may be there to stand by us in times of trouble, a true friend loves at all times, and not only in times of trouble!

What Shelomoh is saying here is that even while a man may have friends he might still come to ruin, however there is One – that is our Master and Elohim who is the True Loving One, who sticks closer than a brother!!!

The world used here for 'adversity' is צָרָה *tsarah* – Strong's H6869 which means, **'affliction, anguish, distress, trouble, tightness'** and is from the word, צָר *tsar* – Strong's H6862 that can mean, **'adversary, enemy, foe'** and this word is also often translated as **tribulation**, which teaches us a vital lesson of realising that in the very distressing times that lay ahead, our help is in our Master and Elohim alone – יְהוָה of Hosts who fights for us and covers us under the shadow of His wings!

Tehillah/Psalm 20:1 **"יְהוָה does answer you in the day of distress! The Name of the Elohim of Ya'aqob does set you on high!"**

There is no better encouragement than hearing and knowing that יְהוָה hears your cry in times of trouble! So as we know that during the tribulation, we who are in Messiah have this wonderful promise! יְהוָה will **defend** those who **'know'** the Elohim of Ya'aqob!

As we consider these great parables we will do well to take careful recognition that we are to guard ourselves against the dangers of straying from set-apartness and allowing wrong thoughts, words and actions to cripple our walk and stain our garments of righteousness! The most common theme we find in this collection of parables is that of one's speech and how powerful it is in regards to every area of our lives and the need for us to have our words seasoned with the salt of the Truth and always set apart יְהוָה Elohim in our hearts, and always be ready to give an answer to everyone asking us for a reason concerning the expectation that is in us, with meekness and fear.

יְהוָה bless you and guard you; יְהוָה make His face shine upon you and show you favour; יְהוָה lift up His face to you and give you Shalom!