

Proverbs 14

(New International Version)

1*The wise woman builds her house,
but with her own hands the foolish one tears hers down.*

2*He whose walk is upright fears the Lord,
but he whose ways are devious despises him.*

3*A fool ♦s talk brings a rod to his back,
but the lips of the wise protect them.*

4*Where there are no oxen, the manger is empty,
but from the strength of an ox comes an abundant harvest.*

5*A truthful witness does not deceive,
but a false witness pours out lies.*

6*The mocker seeks wisdom and finds none,
but knowledge comes easily to the discerning.*

7*Stay away from a foolish man,
for you will not find knowledge on his lips.*

8*The wisdom of the prudent is to give thought to their ways,
but the folly of fools is deception.*

9*Fools mock at making amends for sin,
but goodwill is found among the upright.*

10*Each heart knows its own bitterness,
and no one else can share its joy.*

11*The house of the wicked will be destroyed,
but the tent of the upright will flourish.*

12*There is a way that seems right to a man,*

but in the end it leads to death.

13*Even in laughter the heart may ache,*

and joy may end in grief.

14*The faithless will be fully repaid for their ways,*

and the good man rewarded for his.

15*A simple man believes anything,*

but a prudent man gives thought to his steps.

16*A wise man fears the Lord and shuns evil,*

but a fool is hotheaded and reckless.

17*A quick-tempered man does foolish things,*

and a crafty man is hated.

18*The simple inherit folly,*

but the prudent are crowned with knowledge.

19*Evil men will bow down in the presence of the good,*

and the wicked at the gates of the righteous.

20*The poor are shunned even by their neighbors,*

but the rich have many friends.

21*He who despises his neighbor sins,*

but blessed is he who is kind to the needy.

22*Do not those who plot evil go astray?*

*But those who plan what is good find **a** love and faithfulness.*

23*All hard work brings a profit,*

but mere talk leads only to poverty.

24*The wealth of the wise is their crown,*

but the folly of fools yields folly.

25A truthful witness saves lives,

but a false witness is deceitful.

26He who fears the Lord has a secure fortress,

and for his children it will be a refuge.

27The fear of the Lord is a fountain of life,

turning a man from the snares of death.

28A large population is a king's glory,

but without subjects a prince is ruined.

29A patient man has great understanding,

but a quick-tempered man displays folly.

30A heart at peace gives life to the body,

but envy rots the bones.

31He who oppresses the poor shows contempt for their Maker,

but whoever is kind to the needy honors God.

32When calamity comes, the wicked are brought down,

but even in death the righteous have a refuge.

33Wisdom reposes in the heart of the discerning

and even among fools she lets herself be known.b

34Righteousness exalts a nation,

but sin is a disgrace to any people.

35A king delights in a wise servant,

but a shameful servant incurs his wrath.

THEME: Wisdom For All People (Chapters 10-24)

PURPOSE: Solomon wanted to impart wisdom to all people, regardless of their age, sex, or position in society. These short, wise sayings give us practical wisdom for daily living. We should study them diligently and integrate them into our life.

OUTLINE:

I. THE WISE AND THE FOOLISH (14:1♦9): The wise build up their houses; the wicked tear them down.

II. TRUE JOY (14:10♦13): Laughter conceals a heavy heart.

III. PERSONALITY PATTERNS (14:14♦21): The prudent carefully consider what they do while fools rush in without a thought.

IV. GENERAL DOS AND DON'TS (14:22♦28): Plan for good, work hard, be truthful, and fear the Lord.

V. ANGER AND ENVY (14:29♦33): If you control your anger, you have great understanding. If you are jealous, your life rots away

VI. LIFTING UP KINGDOM AND KING (14:34♦35): Godliness exalts a nation, and a king rejoices in it.

PROVERBS 14:4

When a farmer has no oxen, the stable will be clean, but he will be unable to make a living. The only way to keep your life free of people problems is to keep it free of people. But if your life is empty of people, it is useless; and if you live only for yourself, your life loses its meaning. Instead of avoiding people, we should serve others, share our faith, and work for justice. Is your life clean but empty? Or does it give evidence of your serving God wholeheartedly?

PROVERBS 14:6

We all know mockers, people who scoff at every word of instruction or advice. They never find wisdom because they don't seek it seriously. Wisdom comes to those who apply God's Word to their lives and seek out godly counselors. If the wisdom you need does not come easily to you, perhaps your attitude is the barrier.

PROVERBS 14:12

The path that seems right may offer many options and require few sacrifices. Easy choices, however, should make us take a second look. Is this solution attractive because it allows me to be lazy? because it doesn't ask me to change my life-style? because it requires no moral restraints? The right choice often requires hard work and self-sacrifice. Don't be enticed by apparent shortcuts that seem right but end in death.

PROVERBS 14:29

A nasty and quick temper can be like a fire out of control. It can burn us and everyone else in its path. Anger divides people. It pushes us into hasty decisions that only cause bitterness and guilt. Yet anger, in itself, is not wrong. Anger can be a legitimate reaction to injustice and sin. When you feel yourself getting angry, look for the cause. Are you reacting to an evil situation that you are going to set right? Or are you responding selfishly to a personal insult? Pray that God will help you control a quick temper, channeling your feelings into effective action and conquering selfish anger through humility and repentance.

PROVERBS 14:31

God has a special concern for the poor. He insists that people who have material goods should be generous with those who are needy. Providing for the poor is not just a suggestion in the Bible; it is a command that may require a change of attitude.