

July 1

Scriptures: Read Proverbs 13 & 14

Key Verse: “The fear of the Lord is a fountain of life, to avoid the snares of death.”
(Proverbs 14:27)

Overview

In Proverbs 13 and 14, Solomon relates many contrasts between the righteous man and the wicked fool. He emphasizes the triumph of the righteous over the wicked — the wise over the foolish (e.g. 13:9, 22; 14:11,19). How does this portion of scripture describe the one who is wise? The wise person is one who is faithful to the Lord’s commands. He walks in uprightness because he fears the Lord and His commands. This healthy fear of God is rewarding and will cause him to enjoy a strong confidence in the Lord, and even his children will find their refuge in God. He will enjoy life more abundantly from the fountain of living water. Our Lord Jesus is the source of this life-giving water, and those who trust in Him will not see death (13:13,14; 14:2, 26, 27; cf. John 4:13-14).

The wise person guards his steps, his mouth, and his temper. He speaks only the truth, and therefore his words preserve him (13:2-3, 5; 14:3, 5, 15-17, 29). He is diligent and hard working, and thus he enjoys an increase and leaves an inheritance that will even benefit his grandchildren (13:22; 14:4, 23). A man’s or a woman’s diligence in following the Lord, including showing mercy to the needy (14:21, 31), also benefits his or her own soul, for that one will be spiritually enriched and satisfied (13:4, 19, 25). The home of the wise, godly woman will flourish and be like a refuge and a fortress, since it’s foundation is the Lord and His Word (14:1, 11).

More important than a material inheritance is the spiritual inheritance that the wise and righteous man passes on to his children and grandchildren. As the Scripture teaches, when a person instructs his children in righteousness and in the fear of the Lord, and when he lovingly disciplines the erring child so that from a young age the child will learn the importance of following the Lord’s ways and yielding to the will of God, that child will grow to follow the way of the Lord and not the way of destruction (13:24; cf. 19:18, 22:6, 15; 23:13-14).

In other important proverbs, Solomon warns us to choose our friends carefully, since keeping company with wise people will have a positive influence, making one wiser, but sinful companions bring only destruction (13:20; 14:7). The wise person heeds the good advice of godly counsellors and regards their reproof (13:10,18). This will help him to follow the way of the Lord which leads to everlasting life, as opposed to the man full of self-will who goes his own way, believing it is the right way, yet it leads him to death (14:12,14).

Even though all mankind must die, there is hope for the righteous person who “has a refuge in his death” (14:32). The Lord Jesus is the believer’s Hope of Glory. He is our desire, and He brings sweetness to the soul. He gives us the tree of life and the light of life, wherein we find joy (13:9, 12, 19). Like a good king, the Lord looks upon His faithful and wise servants favourably. When there are enough righteous people in a nation, the Lord will exalt that nation, but if

disobedience to God overrules, then that nation will come under His wrath and judgment, as history has proven (e.g. Israel, Babylon, Rome).

Prayer

Lord God, we pray today for our nation, as well as our own family. For we know that blessings follow those who fear You and destruction follows those who do not. May we always put You first in every area of our lives.