

## Proverbs Week #116 (12:2,3)

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*“A good man will obtain favor from the LORD, but He will condemn a man who devises evil. A man will not be established by wickedness, but the root of the righteous will not be moved.”*  
Proverbs 12:2,3

These words are true. As with every proverb, they must be understood before the weight of that truth can be understood. In the revelation of God’s love in the Messiah, Paul teaches us *“there is no condemnation for those in the Messiah Yeshua.”* (Rom 8:1) This proverb and what it wants to teach us is not at odds with the words of Paul. It’s words paint with a broad brush. As we live our lives trusting in God, we can find favor in His sight. Theologically we might say that no one is good but we should be careful when we make such declarations. When God brings salvation and cleans us from the filth of sin, we are clean. Paul explains it this way in his letter to the Corinthians.

*“Therefore if anyone is in the Messiah, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come. Now all these things are from God, who reconciled us to Himself through The Messiah and gave us the ministry of reconciliation, namely, that God was in The Messiah reconciling the world to Himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and He has committed to us the word of reconciliation.”* 2 Cor 5:17–19

**To Learn Wisdom and Instruction:** How does this change us? How are we transformed and our minds renewed by this truth (Rom 12:1,2)? God wants us to grow and mature in our understanding. As His sheep He shepherds us by teaching us those things that are true. The reality we experience as a people who are redeemed includes the imagery of being reconciled to someone whom we have offended, hurt, mistreated, ignored, and rejected. God’s love reconciles and renews. As we receive His grace daily we are instructed to continue to walk in His grace. It isn’t always easy but God knows what we need and desires to give it to us.

**To Receive Moral Instruction:** The process of accepting His instruction changes us in ways we sometimes may not realize. The book of Proverbs is rich in imagery. The Hebrew word translated established in the verse above is also used in reference to the pillars of the temple, the mountains, and the world itself. The horticultural reference to the root points to the flourishing existence found because the Holy One nourishes the tree or vine. It warns of the dangers of not being rooted in Him (see Prov 11:28, 30; Jud 5:14; Job 14:7-9; and Isa 11:1). In modern terms, what would happen if the electric company stopped supplying electricity? If all generators failed? If the gas pumps all ran dry? Much of our daily activity would literally stop. If we effectively hear the wisdom taught in these verses, we will be both warned and encouraged.

**To Impart Shrewdness or Moral Skills:** We need to be skilled in discerning the difference between a good man who is righteous and one who is wicked and devises evil. One of the best places for each one of us to learn this lesson is within our own heart. As I said last week, we need to “get the log out” of our own eye and apply God’s teaching to our own lives.

**To Discern Wise Counsel:** Are you seeing the wisdom of these words? Are they more precious to you than gold or fine jewels? If not, read them again, study them, and take them to heart. Hear the words of Yeshua our Messiah.

*“Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest. “Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and YOU WILL FIND REST FOR YOUR SOULS. “For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.”* Matt 11:28–30

There is a rest in the Messiah. Each Shabbat teaches us a little bit about this rest. It is to serve us and teach us about the care and concern our God has for us. Is your Shabbat experience restful or restless? If you are restless God may need to teach you more about trusting in Him and understanding what it means to be rooted in Him.