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If you are not a believer in Jesus Christ, or aren't sure and would like to become one, then you need to believe that Jesus Christ was and is the Son of God, that he was God who became a man, that he lived a sinless and perfect life, keeping the Law of God perfect in every way, that he kept faith perfectly, and that he was crucified on that cruel cross for your sins, mine and the entire world - he died for our sins! His death on the cross paid the penalty fully, one time for all sins that we have ever committed and that we will ever commit. He died; he went down into the bowels of the earth, even into Hell, and was raised from the dead on the third day in a resurrected, eternal body. He ascended back into heaven, was seated at the right hand of God, and is now Lord over heaven and earth. He is coming again to judge the world, to raise the dead, where he will give an eternal, resurrected, glorified body to everyone that has believed on him as their Lord and Savior, and to establish his kingdom one earth.

You come become a Christian right now as you read this, by personally placing your faith and trust in Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior; believing that he is God's only begotten Son, that he died on the cross for you and that he was raised from the dead and is now seated in heaven at the right hand of God the Father. *“Believe on the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved..” Acts 16:31a* And when you do trust Christ, and Christ alone, as your Lord and Savior, then go to God the Father in prayer and tell him so. Tell him that you have believed on his Son, thank him for his Son, and thank him for forgiving your sins and saving you! *“That if you confess with your mouth, “Jesus is Lord”, and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved.” Romans 10:9,10* *“For, “Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.” Romans 10:13* *“Therefore, being justified by faith (declared righteous), we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.” Romans 5:1*

Living Among Fools

Romans 1:22, "Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools,"

There are 6 different Hebrew words in the Hebrew that the Bible translates into the one English word **fool**, but they all have a variety of meanings. But they all do have this one thing in common and that it refers to one who lacks judgment, wisdom, or common sense and not just the idea of silliness like a court jester. The English word **fool** comes to us through the French word **fol** and originally from the Latin word **folis**, which was thought of back then as madness, not in the sense of being angry, but in the sense of mental illness. It's a deteriorating mental condition that affects the individual in their behavior, judgment and thought processes.

Folis was used in the Latin to denote one who was insane in contrast to the rest of the people living in a community that were sane and stable in their lives and their comings and goings. The word was brought over into the French fol and later on into the English fool. Some fools could be easily spotted by their bizarre behavior in their towns and villages, while others were spotted by their continuous bad decisions and/or sinful behavior.

A simple definition, or one example of it, would be using two words found in Proverbs 14:1, "Every **wise** (*chokmôth*) woman buildeth her house: but the **foolish** (*'ivveleth*) plucketh it down with her hands." To put it simply the **wise** woman is the one who sits under the teaching of the Word of God, believes it, and applies it in her life concerning herself, her walk with God, raising her children and her family. While the **foolish** woman does not do that. She does not sit under the teaching of the Word of God, she doesn't believe it, and she doesn't apply it to her life, her family and her walk with God.

So one definition of a **fool** is someone who does not apply Bible Doctrine to their life. Which would mean that 1) they would have to be born again believers in Christ, 2) they are sitting under the teaching of God's Word from some local church, 3) they would have to be applying doctrine to their life and life experience. Because the word wisdom is the Hebrew *chakmah* and it meant to live your lives by the doctrines and principles found in God's Word! Those who don't are **foolish!!**

There is foolish behavior and there are foolish decisions. To give examples of foolish behavior and actions today would fill a book, because so many today accept abnormal behavior as being normal. The best way is to look around you and see how many people dress and act today! Hair coloring, hair styles, clothes people wear, the language they use, their bizarre behavior and irrational thought processes are accepted as normal because they are either doing their own thing to express themselves, or someone told them it's stylish. They are "expressing themselves", but what are they saying about themselves?

A. **'ēvîyl** - לְאֵיִל - *Evil* has the ideas in it of: one who lacks wisdom, childish behavior, a someone who is unreasonable, an untactful babbler, one who returns to his vomit concerning his sinful ways in life, one who does not hearken to his father, one who clings tenaciously to his behavior, one who does not know God nor the ways of God because he does not know God's Word.

An *eviy*l person, a **fool**, is one who lacks wisdom because they do not know not know the Word of God neither applies it in their life. They act contrary to reason; not guided by reason or sound judgment; they are also irrational. Their way in life is wrong and counterproductive, but regardless of how bad it turns out, they keep going back to it.

Wrath and anger are connected to his foolishness, so any cross purposes with them will likely end up with you being the recipient of their anger; and this anger can erupt at any moment; they are quick to anger. They despise Bible Doctrine and the wisdom it gives. The fool also has this attitude that he is right in his own eyes and that everything he does is right, therefore everyone else is at fault. "*They're the problem not me.*", the fool thinks. No matter what you put a fool through in punishment or suffering, you can't get his foolishness out of him. Grind him or her down to their basic element and you still can't get the foolishness out of them.

Job 5:2, "*For wrath killeth the **foolish** man, and envy slayeth the silly one.*" 'ėvıyl Anger is closely connected to this kind of fool. The type of anger that is vindictive in nature.

Job 5:3, "*I have seen the **foolish** taking root: but suddenly I cursed his habitation.*" 'ėvıyl

Proverbs 1:7, "*The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge: but **fools** despise wisdom and instruction.*" 'ėvıyl The fool absolutely rejects Bible Doctrine and its application to their life.

Proverbs 12:15, "*The way of a **fool** is right in his own eyes: but he that hearkeneth unto counsel is wise.*" 'ėvıyl This kind of fool is so self deceived and deluded that they think everything they do in life is right. "I'm right", they think.

Proverbs 12:16, "*A **fool's** wrath is presently known: but a prudent man covereth shame.*" 'ėvıyl Being angry and short-tempered is associated with *eviy*l. One needs to avoid being around people who are short-tempered.

Proverbs 27:22, "*Though thou shouldst bray a **fool** in a mortar among wheat with a pestle, yet will not his **foolishness** depart from him.*" "*Though you grind a **fool**, 'ėvıyl, in a mortar, grinding them like grain with a pestle, you will not remove their **folly**, 'ivveleth, from them.*" NIV Can't get the foolishness, or evil, out of them no matter how much physical suffering you put them through.

B. **'ivveleth** - אֵינֶנּוּ - has similar ideas in it, in that its main focus is on someone who refuses to go for the Word of God and/or will not apply it to their lives.

In Psalms 38:1-5 David talks about his wounds stinking and it all went back to him getting involved in some sort of sinful conduct. His sinful conduct aroused the wrath of God toward him resulting in divine discipline and it came out on some problem in his body. David, then, summarized that it was all due to his *'ivveleth*, which was his refusal to abide by the wisdom of Scriptures and apply doctrinal principles to his life. Psalms 38:3, "*There is no soundness in my flesh because of thine anger; neither is there any rest in my bones because of my sin.*" Psalms 38:4, "*For mine iniquities are gone over mine head: as an heavy burden they are too heavy for me.*" Psalms 38:5, "*My wounds stink and are corrupt because of my **foolishness.***"

David is well aware of his failure to apply BD to his life and the self-induced misery and divine discipline that comes upon him from that. He also says that God is well aware of his foolishness, that is, his failure to apply BD. So his prayer is for mercy. Psalms 69:5, “*O God, thou knowest my **foolishness**; and my sins are not hid from thee.*” David is honest about his sins and says they are due to him not applying doctrine, so he asks God for mercy.

Proverbs 5:23, “*He shall die without instruction; and in the greatness of his **folly** he shall go astray.*” This passage talks about going astray with the wrong woman, (or man), as the result of the believer's failure, or refusal to apply Bible Doctrine to the situation. The result of which will lead the believer away from his walk with the Lord, as it did in Solomon's life until he recovered in his later years. We must also remember that when the OT people of God spoke, or wrote, they did not use the word fool, or folly, with every instance. What they did was use the Hebrew words with their own meanings.

Proverbs 14:1, “*Every wise woman (chokmôth) buildeth her house: but the **foolish** plucketh it down with her hands.*” 'ivveleth - תִּבְלֶתָּ We've covered this passage before and it contrasts two women, one who bases her family and home upon the teaching of Bible Doctrine with one who doesn't. The doctrinal woman is described in Proverbs 31, who is a blessing to all around her, while the *ivveleth* woman tears her own family down. Proverbs 31:28, “*Her children arise up, and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praiseth her.*” Wisdom, chakmah is the Word of God that one has learned, believed and understood and applied to one's life circumstances. While *ivveleth*, foolishness, speaks of what happens when one doesn't!

Proverbs 14:8, “*The wisdom of the prudent is to understand his way: but the **folly** of **fools** is deceit.*” Wisdom teaches us to evaluate our lives and decisions to see if they are based upon Bible Doctrine, and if they aren't, then to make the necessary corrections. One of the problems that comes with being a fool is **self deception**. They deceive themselves about their walk in life.

Proverbs 15:21, “***Folly** is joy to him that is destitute of wisdom: but a man of understanding walketh uprightly.*” The fool enjoys his foolishness. He enjoys the fact that he does what he wants to do. In America today they would say, "that's the way I am and you have to accept me."

Proverbs 19:3, “*The **foolishness** of man perverteth his way: and his heart fretteth against the LORD.*” First of all the term **his way**, *derek*, refers to the path that one takes in life, which is to be based upon the teaching of the Word of God, which would have in it today living in the filling of the Holy Spirit, in the new nature, following the will of God for your life, living in peace, etc., all comprising the ideas of what we call living in the spiritual life dynamic.

But then the author says that the refusal to live by wisdom in one's life perverts his way. The word **perverteth** is the piel stem of *sâlah*, which has some interesting meanings in it. It is a life that is contrary to what wisdom teaches, but not only that it is a life that is destructive to oneself and others! The ideas of perverting and twisting are in there, but so also is **slipperiness**! "It's a slippery path they have started on and it will only lead downhill", as we would say. Found in it are the ideas of self-induced misery and divine discipline for the believer, but also destruction of their life and those around them, family, friends, businesses, etc.. Destruction of friendships, marriages, in how their kids turn out, all the way to death, drugs, addictions and imprisonment.

But there is another element in *ivveleth* in that it denotes one's emotional reaction of **anger** against *Yahweh*! The word for **fretteth** is *zâ'aph* and it spoke of anger that ranges from bitterness to rage against God. As with Cain when God rejected his sacrifice. Genesis 4:5, "But unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect. And Cain was **very wrath**, and his countenance fell."

Proverbs 26:11, "As a dog returneth to his vomit, so a fool returneth to his **folly**." The word for **fool** here is *kesîyl* and it refers to one who will not learn from his mistakes and will not respond to his discipline or punishment to correct his errors in life. Therefore, his life is one of not applying doctrine to his life, which ends up in him constantly going back to his wrongful lifestyle.

C. *hâlal* - הָלַל – *Halal* had the idea of being bright, or luminous, then from there it took on the idea of making a show both in appearance and grand eloquence of words. It also had the idea of being proud, boastful and arrogant therefore they were foolish. This refers to those whose emphasis is on the outer appearance they show to others, so as to sway them to their side. Money, fine clothes, expensive cars, the way they come off to others, and their braggadocio puts them in the same category of how Lucifer appears to others.

Job 12:17, "He leadeth counsellors away spoiled, and maketh the judges **fools**." *hâlal*

Psalms 73:3, "For I was envious at the **foolish**, when I saw the prosperity of the wicked." *hâlal* This has always been a problem for the people of God for when we look around in society and see those who are prospering, who have money, nice clothes, good health, a nice family, the material things of life and listen to their bragging about these things, we either get resentful that we don't have them, or we want to be just like them, as it was with Asaph. These people became **foolish** because their emphasis is on the wrong things because of their prosperity.

D. *nâbâl* - נָבַל - *Nabal* has the following ideas found in it: someone who is destructive, low class, mean, ignoble, one who acts disgracefully, one who stirs up strife without considering the consequences of the negative impact on their community, families, or relationships, one who is "good-for-nothing", those who are low in class in their character and standing in the community, one who acts in a low and common manner.

These are what society calls "trailer trash", or "gutter trash", or the "low-lives". They operate down at the bottom of the scale, both in their behavior and in their speech. Their actions are destructive to themselves, their families, and those around them. They are a drain on society producing nothing good and taking up the valuable assets of the communities they live in. They are foul mouthed, of low moral behavior and care not about how their actions influence others.

Job 2:10, "But he said unto her, Thou speakest as one of the **foolish** women speaketh. What? shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil? In all this did not Job sin with his lips." When Job rebuked his wife for what she said, he gave her about the worse insult that he could have given her when she said "Curse God and die!" in Job 2:9. Here was a woman married to a very rich man, who lived in a mansion, and enjoyed being in the highest strata of society, but Job told her that she was acting like the lowest form of filth in the land; she was now down at the level of the most basest of women! Her thoughts, attitude and speech reflected the worse women in town. It was quite a rebuke.

Job 30:8, “*They were children of **fools**, yea, children of base men: they were viler than the earth.*” The lowest form of people then were the homeless, who lived in caves, holes in the ground, the bushes, and brayed like animals and **their** children were insulting Job!

Psalms 14:1, “*The **fool** (Nabal) hath said in his heart, There is no God. They are corrupt, they have done abominable works, there is none that doeth good.*” The **fool** doesn't believe that there is a God, but without the definite article here we have a proper name, Nabal. Nabal doesn't believe there is a God, as spoken by his wife Abigail. And she wrote that Nebalah is with him, which is to say that **fool** is his name and a **female fool** is married to him. 1 Samuel 25:25, “*Let not my lord, I pray thee, regard this man of Belial, even Nabal: for as his name is, so is he; **Nabal** is his name, and **folly** (Nebalah) is with him: but I thine handmaid saw not the young men of my lord, whom thou didst send.*”

E. ba'ar - בָּעַר - Ba'ar spoke of the beasts of the field or cattle and it referred to someone who is stupid. It denoted a dull man, a stupid man because he doesn't know anything, someone who has so compromised his soul that he is like a beast. You can't reason with him; you can't talk to him; he has no doctrine in his soul and is beyond simple rational conversation.

Psalms 73:22, “*So **foolish** was I, and ignorant: I was as a beast before thee.*” *ba'ar* This is how Asaph became because he was overtaken by jealousy and bitterness. His emotional reaction to the prosperity of the wicked drove him to this place.

F. kesiyil - וְכִסְיִל - Kesiyil has the following ideas in it: someone who is fat, dull, sluggish, stupid, lazy and clumsy, one who does not take life seriously, one who will not learn, (he already considers himself to be wise), and can only be kept in line by the use of the rod; he continues to repeat his folly like a dog returning to his vomit; it is unwise and dangerous to entrust one's affairs to a fool.

It describes the young person for whom all attempts at education and training have failed; he acts injudiciously and proves himself foolish and incompetent and therefore must be disciplined. He also causes his parents grief and worry and despises his father and mother.

It describes anyone who lacks understanding, one who despises wisdom, takes no pleasure in understanding, flaunts his folly, wastes what is precious and has no concrete goal. He is brutish and dumb. He is so stupid that he is complacent in his folly; he feels totally secure in it. Nothing can make an impression on him, not even rebukes and blows. His lack of restraint goes with his folly and flares up easily venting his anger. His heart is false and wicked; his heart (mind) **leans toward the left**. He mistakes the serious purpose of life; delights in evil; takes pleasure in wrongdoing; he speaks with perverse lips; he is deceptive; speaks slander; he causes strife to abound; he does not do what he has promised; he is a snare to himself and brings about his own ruin; he is such a danger to himself and others it is better to meet an enraged bear than a fool.

The fool relies on what is worthless, deceptive and short-lived. He has a stubborn, defiant and obstinate persistence in a presumptuous sense of security and perilous stupidity. He rejects the divine reality, which one can only get through Bible Doctrine, instead trusting in his own judgment. The fool's actions are morally characterized as malfeasance using lying, deception and slanderous words to stir up strife with the intent to hurt others. Thus foolishness becomes synonymous with wickedness.

Proverbs 1:22, “How long, ye simple ones, will ye love simplicity? and the scorers delight in their scorning, and **fools** hate knowledge?” *k^esîyl* This kind of fool, like others, has the same thing in common, which is they hate Bible Doctrine.

Proverbs 9:13, “A **foolish** woman is clamorous: she is simple, and knoweth nothing.” *k^esîylûth* The word for **clamorous** is *hâmâh* and it has the following ideas in it: being confused, always making noise, all expressions of their inward agitation caused by their emotions. Instead of calmly, quietly going about their daily affairs, everything is a big drama to them, always talking, always making noise and being very emotional.

Proverbs 10:1, “The proverbs of Solomon. A wise son maketh a glad father: but a **foolish** son is the heaviness (grief) of his mother.” *k^esîyl* A *kesiyl* type of son, *Kesiyl* has the following ideas in it: someone who is fat, dull, sluggish, stupid, lazy and clumsy, one who does not take life seriously, one who will not learn, (he already considers himself to be wise), and can only be kept in line by the use of the rod; he continues to repeat his folly like a dog returning to his vomit; it is unwise and dangerous to entrust one's affairs to a fool, causes his mother much grief, as it did with Esau and his mother.

Proverbs 10:23, “It is as sport to a **fool** to do mischief: but a man of understanding hath wisdom.” *k^esîyl* The word for **sport** here is *s^echôq* and it meant to laugh, to chuckle, to giggle. What it's saying is that this type of person thinks that something is funny, or gets a kick out of it. What a fool thinks is funny is **mischief, zimmâh.** *Zimmâh* refers to planning to do the wrong things in life, or plotting to do evil. The fool gets a kick out of doing what's wrong; he thinks it's funny.

Proverbs 13:19, “The desire accomplished is sweet to the soul: but it is abomination to **fools** to depart from evil.” *k^esîyl* Where the righteous would think it's an abomination to go over to the dark side and do evil; the fool would think it's an abomination to depart from his evildoing.

Proverbs 15:20, “A wise son maketh a glad father: but a **foolish** man despiseth his mother.” *k^esîyl* This passage gets into the idea of the mental attitude that fools have concerning their mothers, who raised them. It's called *bâzâh*; they despise their mothers. **Bazah** meant more than just a negative mental attitude toward someone, but also their activity. It meant to view someone with contempt, to look down upon them, to loathe them. So it's to view their mothers with contempt and then do something to despise them. It would go like this they despise their mothers and do things to spite them! Which is what the case was with Esau.

Proverbs 17:10, “A reproof entereth more into a wise man than an hundred stripes into a **fool**.” *k^esîyl* This passage deals with trying to get someone to correct their ways of wrongdoing and get back on the right path. When dealing with a man of **wisdom**, a man of understanding, biyn, all you have to do is talk to him about it. But if dealing with a **fool**, a hundred lashes on the back won't change him.

Proverbs 17:25, “A **foolish** son is a grief to his father, and bitterness to her that bare him.” *k^esîyl* Sons that refuse to apply doctrine in their lives, who end up being fools, impact their parents differently. They become a **grief** to their fathers, but cause their mothers **bitterness.** It's like all they had to go through in bringing him into this life and raising him up was for nothing.

Which is what Rebekah's sentiment was in Genesis 27:46, "*Then Rebekah said to Isaac, "I'm disgusted with living because of these Hittite women. If Jacob takes a wife from among the women of this land, from Hittite women like these, **my life will not be worth living.**"*" She, like all mothers, after seeing her son make one bad decision after another out of spite for his parents, leads her to the place where she feels like her life was spent in vain.

Ecclesiastes 10:2, "*A wise man's heart is at his right hand; but a **fool's** heart at his left.*"

Proverbs 9:7, "*He that reproveth a **scorner**, lûts, getteth to himself shame: and he that rebuketh a **wicked man**, râshâ', getteth himself a blot.*" "*Whoever corrects a **mocker invites insults**; whoever rebukes the **wicked** incurs abuse.*" NIV

When you look around at some of the people we see so much of in American society today in their crazy behavior and bizarre attire, it makes you wonder if the US has become a veritable "Ship of Fools" incapable of rational thought and normal behavior?

Pastor Mike