

“DISCOVERING WONDERFUL THINGS” Psalm 119:18

[Scripture Ref.: _____] Before you begin to study, Pray for understanding! (Proverbs 1:23) Date: _____

OBSERVATION	INTERPRETATION	APPLICATION	PRAYER
			RESULTS

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[Scripture Ref.: Proverbs 18:13]

Before you begin to study, Pray for understanding! (Proverbs 1:23)

Date: 22 August 2014

OBSERVATION	INTERPRETATION	APPLICATION	PRAYER
Prov. 18:13 He who gives an answer before he hears, It is folly and shame to him. [NASB] • Hears is translated as ‘listens’ (NET, HCSB), listening (NIV, MSG) • Shame is translated as ‘disgrace’ in HCSB - It talks about the importance of listening. - An answer must be given only after hearing about the matter. - The actions is foolish, stupid – it lacks knowledge about the matter. - Moreover, the action is rude, shameful, or disgraceful – because it ignores the facts of the matter. - It is not a commandment to follow or not to follow. “He who” implies that it is a generalized concept – applicable to all. - Moreover, the present tense signifies that it is a timeless truth. (The context, being proverb suggested too.) - Foolishness and shamefulness, here, is the one who answers/speaks, not the one who reports, nor the audience. - It also implies that a wise person listens and understands before he answers. - A person has nothing to answer if he does not know the question.	דָּבָר <i>dabar</i> (answer) – means a word, an advice, an affair, or even commandment. שָׁמָא׳ <i>shama`</i> (hears) – means 1. to hear intelligently (often with implication of attention, obedience, etc. It is a proverb, a timeless advice. Proverbs talks about the fools and the wise: their nature, ways, and destinies. Here, it is about the ways of a fool, which, one must avoid. The word <i>dabar</i> in “he who gives an answer,” encompasses the idea of speaking a word, giving advice, counsel, or even a command about the matter. It is not just a response of ‘Yes’ or ‘No.’ ‘Hearing,’ <i>shama</i>, also has the idea of attentive listening and intelligently. It is not passive listening. So, “he who speaks before he hears” means to answer a person without listening carefully concerning the matter; to counsel someone without knowing the problems; to judge without considering the issues. To counsel someone requires knowing his problems. To answer someone requires knowing his question. Or else, it is rude or over-smart and is foolish.	I need to listen carefully to any issues before I speak, to consider any issues pretty well before I answer. Even before the questioner completes his question, I tend to think of answers to give. That is very presumptuous. In dialogue, conversation, or counseling, it will result not only a bad answer but will disappoint the other speaker if I do not consider his words to the full. This verse teaches me to be patient and considerate (wise). To be Christ-like, I must demonstrate this patient hearing, compassion, and genuine involvement towards the making of solution to any problems. Not to be impatient, not to be over-smart, not to show off, not to gain impression. But with compassion, humility, diligence and genuine love for one another. Or it is foolish intellectually and morally, before man and God.	O God, my Father, help me live to be conformed to the image of Your Son Jesus, my Lord. Help me to grow in humility and love for one another. Empower me that I will be kind, compassionate and patient with people around me. Gracious Lord, control my mouth from speaking foolishness. Open my ears and hearts to people around me so that I might show Your grace. Renew my mind and help me to live out Your truth for Your glory. Amen!
			RESULTS
			This verse has been speaking very freshly to me since Monday. I realize that I must be slow to speak and refrain from acting like I know anything. I have also realized how to show compassion, by not brushing somebody’s problem aside as common. I have been practicing this truth to some extent since then. But I am not satisfied with my practice. 2 days ago, my friend called me up and talked about her relationship problems. I behaved to sympathize with her. The other time, I used to laugh at it away by saying ‘it’s normal’ or ‘I don’t know.’ By God’s grace, I may be able to listen and show compassion towards those who share me their problems. But I have to bring this truth to every of my communication. And this requires an extra abundant grace of God.

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