

Studies in the Book of Proverbs by [John T Polk II](#)
For [The Fellowship Room](#)

(#119) The Proverbs of Solomon 17:2- An "Heir-y" Proverb

Since God Created humans, only God can provide specific understanding of human behavior. God gave Solomon Divine Wisdom (**1 Kings Chapters 3 and 10**) to explain what and why behavior is as it is, and **Proverbs 10:1 - 24:34** are randomly written, as if they were Judgments Solomon made about individual cases brought to him for Divine Wisdom (**1 Kings Chapters 3 and 10**), or simply God-given explanations about life. New Testament passages may help see the continuation of Wisdom offered through Jesus Christ.

Proverbs 17:2:

A wise servant will rule over a son who causes shame, and will share an inheritance among the brothers.

How can a "servant" become part of the family and a "son" lose his portion?

First, the son, by birth, is related to his parents, but should learn to respect his family and his place in it. A son could sell his birthright for a bowl of soup (**Genesis 25:29-34; Hebrews 12:16**); squander his birthright (**Luke 15:11-32**); or obediently work for the family (**Matthew 21:28-32**). A son could cause "shame."

- He who gathers in summer *is* a wise son; He who sleeps in harvest *is* a son who causes shame. (**Proverbs 10:5**)
- He who mistreats *his* father *and* chases away his mother *Is* a son who causes shame and brings reproach. (**Proverbs 19:26**)

A lazy son who will not support himself or help his family "causes shame!" A son who resents and abuses his parents "causes shame and brings reproach!" Parents will feel ashamed to claim a son who refuses to be respectful and work. Or, like Abraham's son by the handmaid Hagar, Ishmael, he could show disrespect for his place and "scoff" and be rejected by his father, Abraham (**Genesis 21:9-14**). A son who doesn't appreciate his own home won't respect anyone else's either, even when he marries!

Second, "a wise servant" may obey and work as if he were a son like the parents want, and thus ingratiate himself to the parents who then give him a son's inheritance. Of the servants born in Abram's house (**Genesis 14:14**), one had distinguished himself so that Abram considered him worthy of a son's inheritance:

Lord GOD, what will You give me, seeing I go childless, and the heir of my house is Eliezer of Damascus?' Then Abram said,



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"Look, You have given me no offspring; indeed one born in my house is my heir!" ([Genesis 15:2-3](#))

However, God's Plan was not to be through Abram's actual son through Hagar, Ishmael, nor Eliezer the servant "adopted" by Abram, but rather, God's covenant was to be through Sarah's son, Isaac ([Genesis 17:18-22](#)).

Moses was God's "servant" in God's House in the Old Testament, Israelites; but Jesus Christ is the Son who is now over God's House since the New Testament, the church of Christ:

For this One has been counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as He who built the house has more honor than the house. For every house is built by someone, but He who built all things is God. And Moses indeed was faithful in all His house as a servant, for a testimony of those things which would be spoken afterward, but Christ as a Son over His own house, whose house we are if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm to the end. ([Hebrews 3:3-6](#))

Though Moses was a "wise" servant, for he "was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians" ([Acts 7:22](#)), he never was accepted as the Son over the House of God as Jesus Christ has been! Moses' Law was never given for the Church of Christ to observe, but was only for the Israelites, and to lead to Jesus Christ ([Deuteronomy 5:1-3, 6](#); [Galatians 3:21-29](#)).

Jesus Christ never brought "shame" to His Father!

