

# What are the 7 Pillars of Wisdom?



Mishle/Proverbs gives us practical advice and life-principles that show us how to live wisely in the fear of יהוה. The book personifies wisdom as a woman who calls out to the naïve and simple. In Mishle/Proverbs 9:1 we find this intriguing statement:

## **Mishle/Proverbs 9**

1 **“Wisdom has built her house, she has hewn out her seven pillars.”**

Why seven? Is this a random number, or is there a reason Shlomo/Solomon chose to mention the number seven? We know יהוה loves numbers; He also speaks the mystery language.

יהוה does talk a lot about wisdom in Scripture, and several passages help us discover what these seven pillars might be. There are other possibilities; this is just one practical application, taken from יהוה’s Word, that helps us build a house of wisdom.

## **Building a Foundation**

A house must have a foundation, and we find ours in:

## **Mishle/Proverbs 1**

**7 “The fear of יהוה is the beginning of knowledge.”**

A life of wisdom begins by seeing יהוה from the right perspective. To fear יהוה is to have reverence for Him, acknowledging He has all power and authority. He makes the rules. **He alone has the final say. He is the only source of true wisdom, as He is the source of our salvation.**

The apostle Sha’ul/Paul reminds us that Yeshua alone is where we will find the treasures of wisdom on which to build a life, when he prays for believers’ understanding. Understanding of what?

## **Qolashim/Colossians 2:1-3**

For I wish you to know what a great struggle I have for you and those in Laodikeia, and for as many as have not seen my face in the flesh, 2 in order that their hearts might be encouraged, being knit together in love, and to **all riches of the entire confirmation of understanding, to a true knowledge of the secret of Elohim, and of the Father, and of the Messiah, 3 in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.**

Wisdom has “hewn out” seven pillars in our house of wisdom. This implies that they are not built easily but take work. These are not things which come naturally to us, but יהוה will establish them in our lives as we grow in faith and wisdom.

To define our pillars, we are going to cross reference several passages in the Brit Chadashah/New Testament. The book of Ya’aqov/James has often been called “the Mishle/Proverbs of the Brit Chadashah/New Testament” because of its emphasis on wisdom and its practical nature. Ya’aqov/James advises us to seek wisdom from יהוה, who will give it to us generously

## **Ya’aqov/James 1**

**5 If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of Elohim, who gives to all generously and without reproach, and it shall be given to him.**

We find, interestingly, seven descriptive terms of the wisdom that comes from יהוה, which we can use to name our pillars.

### Ya'aqov/James 3

17 “But the wisdom from above is first **1pure**, then **2peaceable**, **3gentle**, **4reasonable**, **5full of mercy and good fruits**, **6unwavering**, **7without hypocrisy**”

**Let's consider these pillars as the practical actions or way of life that we are pursuing.**

We'll also look at:

1. The fruit of the Ruach in Galatyiim/Galatians 5:22-23 (*the outward expression of wisdom*)
2. The beatitudes in Mattithyahu/ Matthew 5:3-12 (*the character traits of a wise person*)
3. Kepha/Peter's list of qualities in Kepha Bet/2Peter1:5-8 (*the spiritual disciplines of the wise follower of Yeshua*).

## **Pillar 1 – Purity**

**Pure** is the Greek word ***hagnos***, meaning “clean, chaste, innocent, pure from carnality, modest” and is a form of ***hagios***, translated set-apart.

Mishle/Proverbs talks much about set-apartness, especially sexual purity. Shlomo/Solomon warns against the lure of adultery and the pitfalls of immorality. But purity is more than just avoiding sexual sin. **The wise person avoids sin in all its forms, in thought, word and deed.**

### Galatyiim/ Galatians 5

22 “But the fruit of the Ruach is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, **23 gentleness, self-control**; against such things there is no law.”

The Ruach of יהוה works in us to produce **purity**, and He does this through **self-control**. We resist fleshly desires and pursue purity

because the Ruach is more powerful, and we have died to our sinful nature (*Rom. 8*).

Yeshua described this character trait in the beatitudes when He said:

#### Mattithyahu/Matthew 5

4 “Blessed are those who mourn” (*those who are repentant over their sin*)

8 “Blessed are the **pure** in heart”

Kepha describes this as **moral excellence**, the first in his list of Ruachual disciplines.

#### Kepha Bet/2Peter 1

5 And for this reason do your utmost to add to your belief <sup>1</sup>**uprightness**, to uprightness <sup>2</sup>**knowledge**, 6 to knowledge <sup>3</sup>**self-control**, to self-control <sup>4</sup>**endurance**, to endurance <sup>5</sup>**reverence**, 7 to reverence <sup>6</sup>**brotherly affection**, and to brotherly affection <sup>7</sup>**love**. 8 For if these are in you and increase, they cause you to be neither inactive nor without fruit in the knowledge of our Master יהושע Messiah.

## **Pillar 2 – Peace**

**Peace** is the word *shalom* and is the absence of conflict and hostility. It means to be in harmony, or at rest. To be peaceable is to pursue peace in our relationships as a result of the peace we have experienced in salvation.

**Peace** is a fruit of the Ruach according to Gal. 5:22.

Yeshua died to bring reconciliation and peace between all men and יהוה

#### Ephesiyim/Ephesians 2

15 having abolished in His flesh the enmity [*Qol/Col 2:14, Qol/Col 2:20, Ma'asei/Act 11:1-3*] – the torah of the commands in dogma – so as to create in himself one renewed man from the two, **thus making peace**, 16 **and to completely restore**

**to favour both of them unto Elohim** in one body through the stake, having destroyed the enmity by it. 17 And having come, He brought as Good News **peace to you who were far off, and peace to those near.** [*Yesh/Isa 57:19*]

In Kepha's list of spiritual disciplines, we can connect **love** to this pillar of peace. After saying

### **Mattithyahu/Matthew 5**

9 “Blessed are the **peacemakers**”

Yeshua tells us what that looks like in practical wisdom.

### **Mattithyahu/Matthew 5**

43 “You heard that it was said, ‘You shall love your neighbour [*Vay/Lev 19:18*] and hate your enemy.’ 44 “But I say to you, **love your enemies, bless those cursing you, do good to those hating you, and pray for those insulting you and persecuting you**”

Peace comes when we love our enemies. Peace, at its core, is a cessation of war. The wise man chooses to love, and peace is the outcome.

## **Pillar 3 – Gentleness**

**Gentle** is *epieikēs*; it means seemly, fitting, fair, and equitable. It expresses forbearance and to look humanely and reasonably at the facts of a case.

**Gentleness** is also a fruit of the Ruach, but translates the word, *chrēstotēs*, in Gal. 5:22. This word describes kindness towards others, as goodness in action. It means treating others not in indignation against sin, but in grace, tenderness, and compassion.

Yeshua brought our attention to this character trait as well:

### **Mattithyahu 5**

5 “Blessed are the **meek** [*gentle*], because they shall inherit the earth.”

Kepha does not mention gentleness, but he does include **self-control**. Why do we need self-control to be a gentle person? Sha'ul/Paul gives us a perfect example in

### **Timotiyos Bet/2 Timothy 2**

*23 But refuse foolish and stupid questions, knowing that they breed quarrels. 24 And a servant of the Master should not quarrel but **be gentle towards all**, able to teach, patient when wronged, 25 in **meekness** instructing those who are in opposition, lest somehow Elohim gives them repentance unto a thorough knowledge of the truth, 26 and they come to their senses, out of the snare of the devil, having been taken captive by him to do his desire.*

It is a wise person who can gently disagree with a person, setting aside their own indignation while keeping their emotions under control.

## **Pillar 4 – Humility**

Ya'aqov/James uses the word **reasonableness**; **eupeithēs** is translated more literally as “easy to be intreated.” The word means compliant, ready to obey. In Yirmeyahu/Jeremiah 17:23, יהוה said:

### **Yirmeyahu/Jeremiah 17**

23 “But they did not obey, or incline their ear, and they made their neck stiff not to hear and not to receive instruction.

This is the opposite of reasonableness, or humility! The wise person is willing to be corrected and change course when confronted. To say it another way, we are “able to be reasoned with.”

Yeshua calls this kind of person “poor in Ruach” (**Matt. 5:3**), one who can admit their own sin. To be reasonable requires humility, and is expressed in **kindness**, the fruit of the Ruach that relates to reasonableness. It is to be easily correctable, not responding in a haughty or prideful way.

Kepha describes this as **brotherly kindness**, in which believers cherish one another as brothers and sisters.

In the context of teaching on spiritual gifts, and the responsibility of the body of Messiah to “speak the truth in love” to one another so that we all grow to spiritual maturity, Sha’ul/Paul prefaced his words with the admonition to “show tolerance for one another in love” with all humility.

### **Ephesiyim/Ephesians 4**

2 with all **humility and meekness, with patience, bearing with one another in love**

The wise person accepts correction with a humble and kind Ruach, and we are to correct one another in love and humility. We are to be reasonable, spurring one another on to obedience to Messiah.

## **Pillar 5 – Mercy**

Ya’aqov/James told us that the wisdom from above is “**full of mercy and good fruits.**”

**Mercy** is *eleos*, defined as kindness or goodwill towards the miserable and the afflicted, joined with a desire to help them.

**Fruit** is *karpos*, that which originates or comes from something, an effect or result such as an act or deed.

Our good deeds are rooted in mercy. We act for the benefit of others (we do good to them) because we are moved by mercy.

**Goodness** is a fruit of the Ruach, as the indwelling Ruach of יהוה prompts us to act.

Yeshua commended this character trait in Matt. 5:7 when He said:

### **Mattithyahu/Matthew 5**

7 “Blessed are the **merciful.**”

Kepha does not mention “goodness;” instead he adds “**Godliness**” to his list of spiritual disciplines.

Godliness is *eusebeia* and indicates reverence and devotion toward יהוה.

Interestingly, Kepha uses the plural of the word, indicating “acts” of Godliness. In other words, we act as יהוה would act, out of devotion to Him.



I believe this supports our pillar of mercy perfectly. יהוה showed us mercy and acted on our behalf, doing the only good deed that could save us in sending Yeshua to the stake.

The wise person recognizes that we have no goodness in and of ourselves to offer others (*Rom. 7:18*), but יהוה's Ruach in us absolutely is good and works mercifully through us on behalf of others.

## Pillar 6 – Faithfulness

Ya'aqov/James describes this pillar as “**unwavering**.” The word is **adiakritos** and means without dubiousness, ambiguity, or uncertainty; it has the idea of hesitating or doubting.

Ya'aqov/James tells us we must not doubt in our pursuit of wisdom but ask in faith

### Ya'aqov/James 1

6 But he **should ask in belief, not doubting**, for he who doubts is like a wave of the sea driven and tossed by the wind. 7 For that man should not think that he shall receive whatever from the Master 8 he is a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.

The doubter is described as an unstable, double-minded man, tossed about like the sea.

To be unwavering is to be **faithful**, a fruit of the Ruach. It is also to be **patient** (another fruit), willing to wait on יהוה and stand firm in the trials of life.

Yeshua commends the faithful by saying:

### Mattithyahu/Matthew 5

10 “Blessed are those persecuted for righteousness’ sake, because theirs is the reign of the heavens. 11 “Blessed are you when they reproach and persecute you, and falsely say every wicked word against you, for My sake. 12 “Rejoice and be glad, because your reward in the heavens is great. For in this way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.



Obedience is the hallmark of faithfulness.

Kepha includes **perseverance** in his list of spiritual disciplines. The wise man settles his heart on יהוה, and stays there, regardless of what the culture around him says or how difficult the circumstances may be.

## Pillar 7 – Truth

Ya'aqov/James' last description is “**without hypocrisy**,” meaning sincere and genuine; the word is ***anypokritos*** and is only used five other times, referring either to unfeigned love or unfeigned faith.

What does it mean to be without hypocrisy? In his prayer of repentance, David says it very well.

### Tehillim/Psalm 51

6 See, you have desired truth in the inward parts, And in the hidden part You make me know wisdom.

True wisdom comes when we are completely honest before יהוה, sincerely faithful, genuinely loving Him with all that we are, and committed to walking in truth.

The fruit of the Ruach that undergirds truth is **love** and **joy**. Walking in truth brings joy:

### Yochanan Gimel/3John 1

4 I have no greater joy than to hear of my children walking in truth.

We are to speak the truth in love (*Eph. 4:15*) and love one another indeed and truth (*Yochanan Aleph/1John 3:18*).

Yeshua said:

### Mattithyahu/Matthew 5

6 “Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, because they shall be filled.

Teaching us that the life that pursues truth is the only life that satisfies.

Kepha's last spiritual discipline ties in perfectly with truth, as he admonishes us to pursue **knowledge**.

We circle back to where we began with the foundation of all wisdom, found only in the fear and knowledge of יהוה, through Yeshua our Messiah, who is “the way, the truth, and the life” (*Yochanan/John 14:6*).

**Purity.**

**Peace.**

**Gentleness.**

**Humility.**

**Mercy.**

**Faithfulness.**

**Truth.**

**Seven pillars that create a house of wisdom, built on the fear and knowledge of יהוה.**