

A HEART OF WISDOM  
Not-quite-random Thoughts  
On Lacking & Gaining a Heart in Proverbs

It is a laborious madness and an impoverishing one, the madness of composing vast books—setting out in five hundred pages an idea that can be perfectly related in five minutes. (Borges 1998, 67)

## PRÉCIS

The Hebrew word *lev/levav* (synonymous forms) usually rendered “heart” in English, occurs more frequently in the book of Proverbs [Pr] than in any other biblical book. Its form also makes its use in Pr stand out from the rest of Scripture. Together, these facts suggest the central rôle of the heart in a wise life.

According to Solomon, two groups of people lack a heart: the *naïf* and the fool; the wise (discerning, insightful, &c.) have a heart. The process of getting a heart is the process of changing from *naïveté* to wisdom by submitting to discipline and instruction.

The book of Proverbs portrays the *naïf* as a “neutral” moral agent, lacking the experience that is necessary in order to make consistently wise decisions. One who is care-less with regard to his or her moral and spiritual welfare, who refuses to recognize his or her need of correction and instruction, is on the path that leads to folly,<sup>1</sup> lacking the heart that will guide her or him to life-giving wisdom. The *naïf*, on the other hand, who is concerned for his or her spiritual and moral well-being—his or her inner self—and who thus submits willingly and with humility to correction, thereby sets his or her feet on the path that leads to a “heart of wisdom”.<sup>2</sup>

## INTRODUCTION

The Hebrew noun *lev/levav*, “heart”, occurs more often in the book of Proverbs than in any other biblical book except the Psalter. It occurs more frequently in the book of Proverbs than in any other biblical book. This suggests the importance of the “heart” for the pursuit of wisdom and for living wisely and well.

A number of these texts mention the person who “lacks a heart”;<sup>3</sup> two sayings suggest that a person can “get” or “acquire” a heart (15.32; 18.15).<sup>4</sup> This brief paper examines these passages as a first step toward two goals: (1) trying to understand what it means to “lack a heart”; and (2) trying to see if the sayings suggest how what is lacking may be acquired. English versions of the Bible—even those which identify themselves as “literal” or “essentially literal”—render the word *lev/levav* as “sense” or “mind” or “understanding” in the passages that mention “lacking” or “acquiring” a heart.<sup>5</sup>

This is not, however, a paper on translation technique.<sup>6</sup> It does not address the rendering of *lev* in any given passage, nor does it discuss whether or not *lev* should be rendered “concordantly” (i.e., by the same English word

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<sup>1</sup>In Proverbs, the path of folly leads inevitably to death.

<sup>2</sup>The phrase “heart of wisdom” is not proverbial; it occurs only in Ps 90.12. It is, however, appropriate to the theme of this paper.

<sup>3</sup>Nothing in Biblical Hebrew corresponds to the English “indefinite article” (“a”, “an”). I have chosen to render all occurrences of *lev* or *levav* as “a heart”, unless it is defined in some way (e.g., “the heart”, “his heart”).

<sup>4</sup>All references are to the biblical book of Proverbs, unless otherwise labelled.

<sup>5</sup>NASU, e.g., consistently renders it “heart” in all occurrences in Pr except the passages about “lacking” and “gaining” a heart, where it is rendered “sense” (with a marginal note, “Lit. heart”).

<sup>6</sup>The inconsistent rendering of the words *lev/levav* in the book of Proverbs, however, was the question that first roused my curiosity, specifically whether or not rendering *lev/levav* by “mental” terms such as “mind”, “sense”, and “understanding” rather than as “heart” affects how we understand some of the instruction of the book of Proverbs. In one modern “literal” version, e.g., all eight occurrences of “mind” represent *lev* (12.8; 15.14; 16.9; 17.20; 18.2, 15; 22.17; 23.33), as do all eight occurrences of “sense” (6.32; 7.7; 11.12; 12.11; 15.21; 17.16, 18; 24.30) (NASU).

in all of its occurrences). At the same time, however, it seems that a literal translation that renders the phrase consistently as “lacking/gaining a heart” is both appropriate and helpful, not merely because maintaining the image encourages readers to enter the biblical world rather than transpose that world into their own, but also because the images of “lacking” and “acquiring” a *heart*, being more striking to our ears, may encourage us to consider more closely just what the proverbs are saying.<sup>7</sup>

## A FEW NUMBERS

1. The Hebrew word *lev/levav* occur c. 850 times in Biblical Hebrew.<sup>8</sup> It occurs ninety-nine times in the book of Proverbs (11.6% of its total biblical occurrences).<sup>9</sup> Given the relatively small size of Pr (2.26% of total words in the Hebrew Bible), this is an extraordinarily number of occurrences. The only book in which it occurs more often than in Pr is the Psalter (136x = 16.0% of its total occurrences in Biblical Hebrew), a book that has nearly three times as many words as Pr.

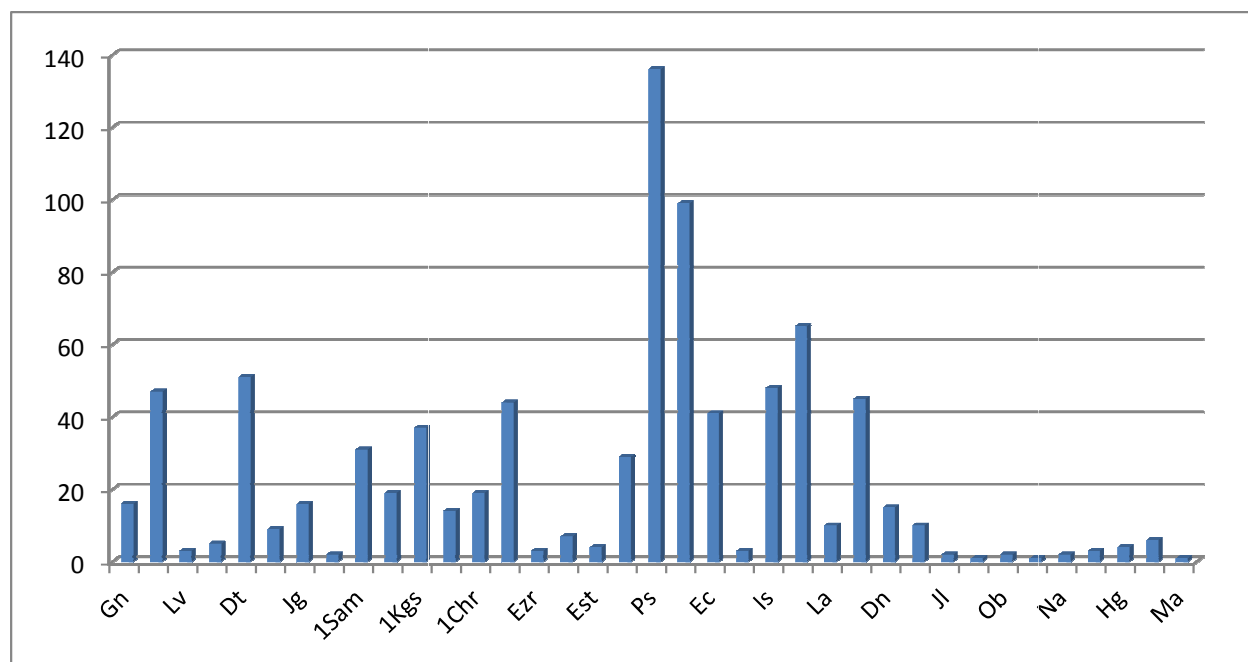


Table I: Total Occurrences per Book of *lev/levav*<sup>10</sup>

<sup>7</sup>Rendering any word consistently encourages readers who lack access to the Hebrew text to see that word’s range of function or meaning more clearly.

<sup>8</sup>Statistics are according to Andersen & Forbes 1989 and GramCORD.

<sup>9</sup>The shorter form, *lev* (לב) is far more common in Pr (97x) than the longer, *levav* (לבב; 2x; 4.21; 6.25). In Biblical Hebrew as a whole, they occur in c. 560 and 230 verses, respectively. (They occur more than once in a number of verses.)

<sup>10</sup>This chart and the following are sized vertically in order to register small amounts.

2. *Lev/levav* also occurs more frequently in Pr than in any other biblical book (i.e., it accounts for a higher proportion of the total words in the book). The books of Proverbs and Ecclesiastes are the only two books for which this proportion is higher than three-quarters of one percent (0.75%); of the biblical books as long as or longer than Pr, only Pr, Pss, and Ecc have a rate of occurrence of *lev/levav* higher than c. 0.25%.

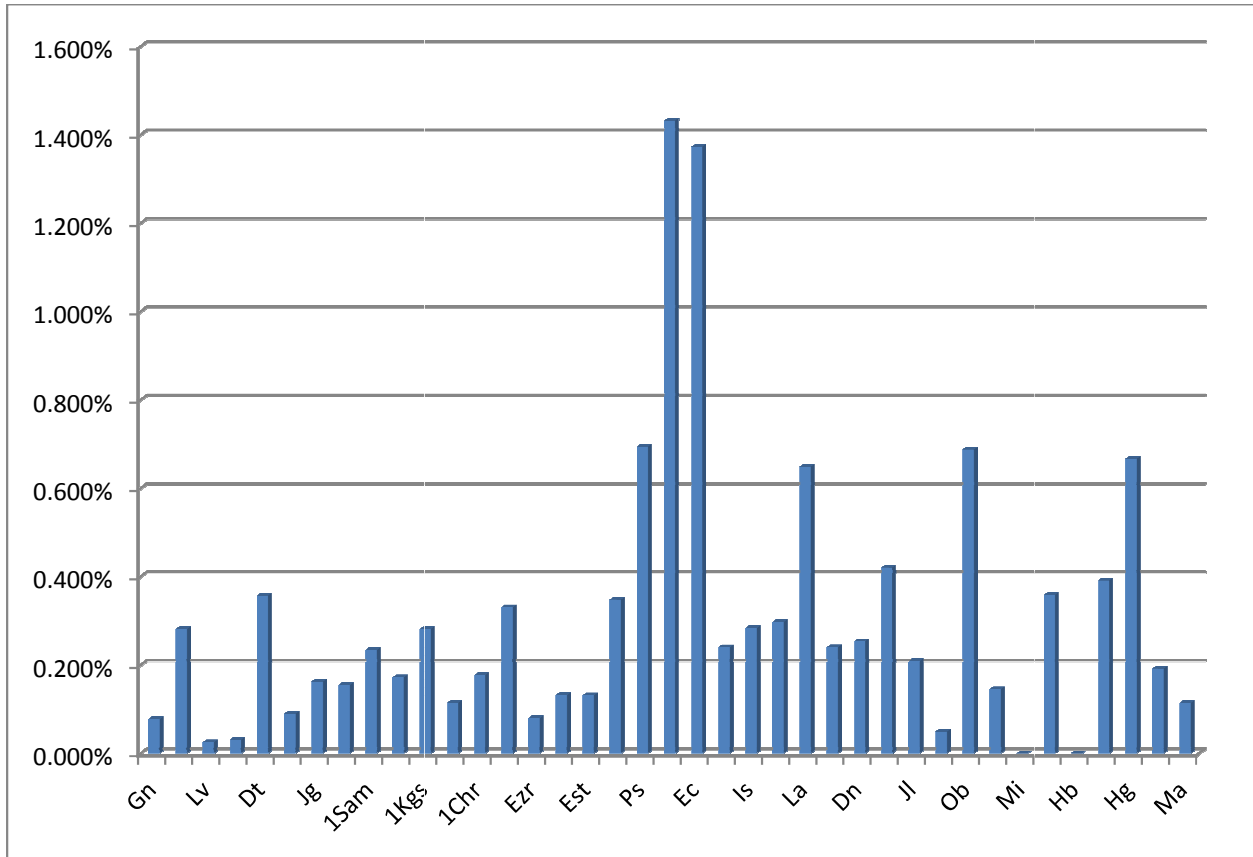


Table II: Relative Frequency per Book of *lev/levav*

3. Suffixed Forms. In order to show pronominal possession (“his heart”, “my heart”), Biblical Hebrew usually attaches a “pronominal fragment” to a noun: e.g., *lev*, “[a]<sup>11</sup> heart”; *libbi*, “my heart”, *libbô*, “his heart”.
- Lev/levav* occurs 535 times in Biblical Hebrew with a pronominal suffix (“his/her/your/their/our/my heart”), which means that suffixed forms account for more than three-fifths of its total occurrences (62.9%).
  - In books that are predominantly narrative (Genesis – 2 Kings, Ezra-Nehemiah, Chronicles), suffixed forms account for nearly two-thirds of its total occurrences (212/327 = 63.9%); in the “poetic” books apart from Proverbs (Job, Psalms, Song of Songs, Ecclesiastes) they account for more than three-quarters (148/209 = 78.8%).
  - In biblical books with a statistically significant number of occurrences, Proverbs is the only book in which with fewer than 40% of its occurrences are suffixed (34/99 = 34.3%).<sup>12</sup>

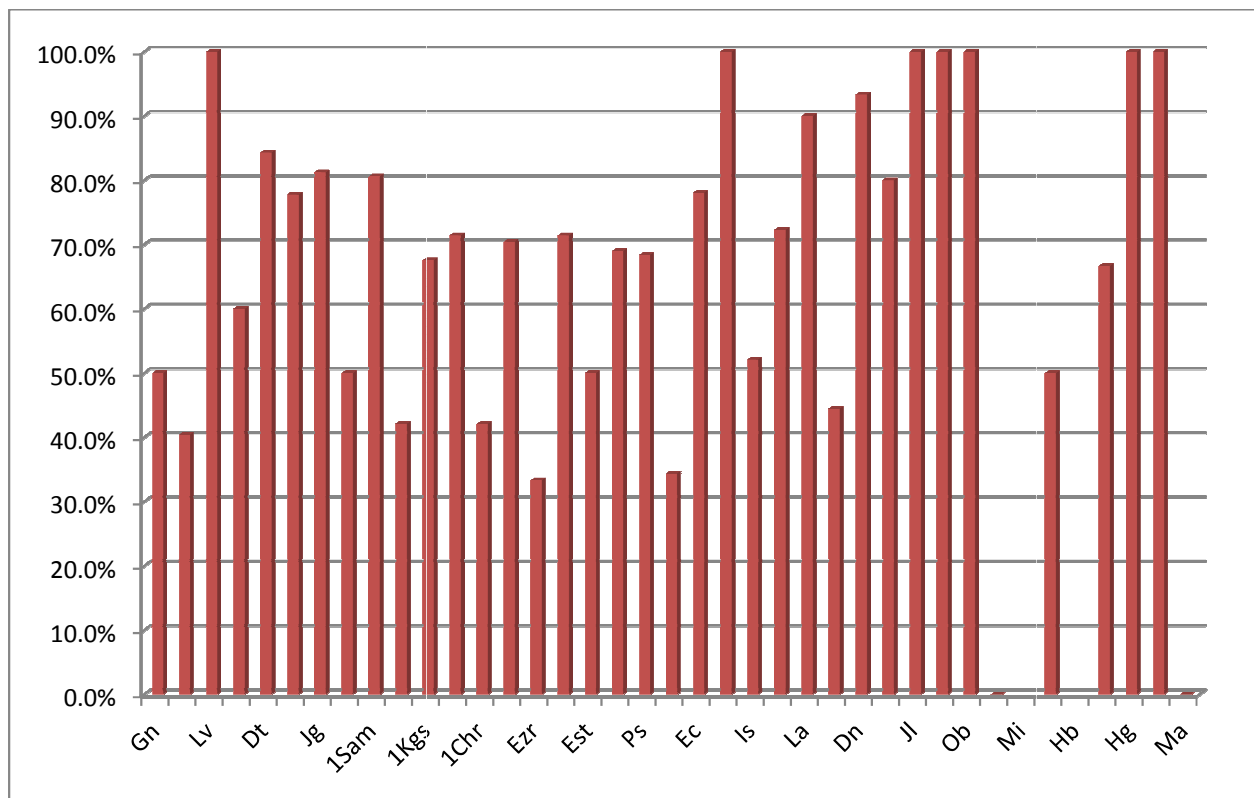


Table III: Frequency per Book of Suffixed Forms of *lev/levav*

### Implications

These differences—its high number of total occurrences, high frequency of occurrences, and low frequency of suffixed occurrences—together make the book of Pr a canonical “outlier” with reference to “heart”, which raises the probability that *lev/levav* functions unusually in the book of Proverbs, which suggests (to reiterate) a close relationship between “heart” and wisdom.

<sup>11</sup>Hebrew lacks a form corresponding to the English indefinite article, “a[n]”.

<sup>12</sup>They occur once in two short books: Jonah (*levav*; Jo 2.4) and Malachi (*lev*; Mal 2.2); both are non-suffixed. The only other biblical book with fewer than 40% suffixed forms is Ezra, in which they occur only three times, one of which is suffixed.

## “TO LACK A HEART”

The phrase “lacking a heart”<sup>13</sup> occurs eight times in Biblical Hebrew, only in the book of Proverbs. Although it is never defined (in the statement such as “When I say ‘lacking a heart’ I mean ...”), the passages in Pr that describe the effect of lacking a heart enable us to suggest several what it means.

Biblical poetry tends to have been written in sets of parallel lines, which allows us to approach a definition of the phrase “lacking a heart” by examining the corresponding term(s) in each set of parallel lines in order to see what Solomon either compares (*via* synonyms) or contrasts (*via* antonyms) with it. This means that we can compare the phrase to the words in the other line in order to understand what Solomon was describing.

1. The phrase “lacking a heart” parallels the idea of *naïveté*, “simplicity”, or “innocence” that we tend to associate with youth or lack of experience (7.7; 9.4-5, 16-17). The *naïf* is soon beguiled in the “parable” of the youth seen through the narrator’s window (Pr 7.1-27). The “preface” to the book of Proverbs (Pr 1-9) ends with invitations from both Wisdom and Folly, portrayed as hostesses (9.1- call the *naïf* in nearly identical invitations; they invite the one who (as the narrator informs us) “lacks a heart” (9.4, 16).

וַאֲרָא בַּפְתָּאִים      And I saw among the *naïve*,  
 אֲבִינָה בְּבָנִים נֶעַר חֲסֵר-לֵב:      I discerned among the sons a youth lacking a heart. (7.7)

מִי־פֶתִי      Who is *naïve*?  
 יָסֵר הֵנָּה      He should turn here!  
 חֲסֵר-לֵב אָמְרָה לוֹ:      To one lacking a heart she says, (9.4)  
 לָכוּ      Come!  
 לֶחֱמוּ בֶלְחֶמִי      Eat my bread!  
 וּשְׁתוּ בַיַּיִן מִסִּכְתִּי:      And drink the wine I have mixed! (9.5)

מִי־פֶתִי      Who is *naïve*?  
 יָסֵר הֵנָּה      He should turn here!  
 חֲסֵר-לֵב אָמְרָה לוֹ:      To one lacking a heart she says, (9.16)  
 מַיִם־גְּנוּבִים יִמְתְּקוּ      Stolen waters are sweet  
 וְלֶחֶם סֵתֵרִים יִנְעָם:      And secret bread is pleasant. (9.17)

These vv. imply that youth, inexperience, and “lacking a heart” are all naturally related, which fits the overall teaching of Pr as a whole, which implies in turn that experience can lead to gaining a heart, or to one’s gaining prudence or insight.

The form *peti*, “simple”, “*naïf*”, occurs seventeen times in Biblical Hebrew, thirteen times in Pr (Pr 1.4; 1.32; 7.7; 8.5; 9.4, 6, 16; 14.15, 18; 19.25; 21.11; 22.3; 27.12), three times in the Psalter (Ps 19.8; 116.6; 119.130), and once in Ezk (Ezk 45.20).

Of thirteen proverbial occurrences, five are *cautionary* or *negative*, four of these texts warning that the *naïf* destroy themselves by their ignorance and lack of forethought (1.32; 22.3 || 27.12; 14.15) and one that warns that folly is as naturally theirs as the property that they inherit by virtue of their birth (14.18). Four of these passages contrast the *naïf* with the “prudent” (14.15, 18; 22.3; 27.12); the fifth compares them to fools (1.32).

<sup>13</sup>The phrase “lack[ing] a heart” is non-verbal, a “construct chain”, made up of a substantive adjective (“one who lacks”) followed by an indefinite noun (“[a] heart”), that might be translated even more clumsily as “one who lacks a heart” (“a-lacking-one-of [or “with-respect-to”] [a] heart”). I suspect that such a rendering is, however, far more pedantic than helpful.

Five of these passages might be considered *positive*, or at least *hopeful*, in that they appear to offer some hope that the *naïf* will or can become less naïve, and perhaps even prudent. One outcome of studying Pr is that the *naïf* gain prudence (1.4); they also gain prudence or become wise when they see punishment meted out to scoffers (19.25a-b; 21.11a) or the wise corrected (19.25c-d; 21.11b). And twice Wisdom herself calls on the *naïf* to act—either by abandoning their *naïveté* (9.6), or by exercising “discernment” (“perspicacity, understanding, insight”), in apparent defiance of their *naïveté* (8.5).

There is hope, in other words, for the *naïf*,<sup>14</sup> if only because life itself adds experience to our lives, which affords us further opportunities to learn, so that we grow out of *naïveté* into either folly or wisdom. The freedom of this choice is demonstrated by the invitations of the women Wisdom and Folly (9.1-6, 13-18), which also warn us that the wrong decision can be disastrous, either immediately or eventually—we are not told when the “depths of Sheol” will claim the lackheart who chooses amiss (9.18).

Finally, three verses present the *naïf* as *neutral* or *undecided*—they simply use the term without prejudice regarding their situation or outcome; only the larger context reveals their fate. The *naïf* who respond to Wisdom’s invitation find wisdom and life, abandon their *naïveté*, and so (truly) live (9.4-6); those who respond instead to the invitation of Folly (personified (9.13-17) or of a particular (type of) foolish woman (7.1-27)) end up dead (7.7; 9.18).

- To lack a heart leads one into self-destruction by leading one into foolish behaviour, such as adultery, which lays waste a person’s inner being (6.32), as well as having the potential to ruin him socially and financially (5.7-14):

נִאֵף אִשָּׁה חָסֵר-לֵב      Whoever commits adultery with a woman lacks a heart;  
 מִזְשָׁחִית נַפְשׁוֹ הוּא יַעֲשֶׂנָה:      Whoever destroys his soul does it. (6.32)

It also leads to the folly of what we might call “co-signing” a loan, or obligating oneself on behalf of another person, a course of action that our culture considers a “normal” business transaction, even if one to be done with caution. Solomon, however, compares it to a “snare” or “trap”, and adds that whoever pledges himself has been captured like a gazelle or bird, and exhorts his readers to do whatever is necessary—even to the point of social embarrassment—in order to be free of such a foolish (and dangerous) obligation (6.1-5). The “lackheart” lacks the foresight to anticipate the extent of his obligation should his friend “default”.

אָדָם חָסֵר-לֵב הוֹקֵעַ כָּף      A man who lacks a heart pledges  
 עֵרֵב עֵרוּבָה לְפָנָי רֵעֵהוּ:      And becomes guarantor in his neighbour’s presence. (17.18)

Two nearly identical sayings contrast the person who pursues “empty things” (which remain undefined)<sup>15</sup> with the diligent farmer who works (lit., “serves”) his land. The first, Pr 12.11 says that “whoever pursues empty things lacks a heart”; the other says that the same person “... is satiated with poverty”. Lacking a heart leads, apparently, to the pursuit of “empty things”, which leads in turn to poverty (28.19b).

עֶבֶד אֲדָמְתוֹ יִשְׂבַע-לֶחֶם      Whoever works his land is satiated<sup>16</sup> with bread,  
 מְרַדֵּף רִיקִים חָסֵר-לֵב:      Whoever pursues empty things lacks a heart. (12.11)

<sup>14</sup>Unlike the fool (for whom Proverbs holds out no hope.

<sup>15</sup>It is possible that *réq(im)*, “empty [things]” had a specific referent, readily understood by any Iron Age Israelite or ANE citizen; we can but supply referents based on our own experience and imagination.

<sup>16</sup>The word rendered “satiated with” in these lines does not mean that the lackheart is satisfied with poverty (as in “has had the right amount”), but rather that instead of eating food and so being strengthened for his life and work, he eats only poverty (i.e., has no food).

עֵבֶר אֲדָמְתוֹ יִשְׁבַּע-לֶחֶם    Whoever works his land is satisfied with bread,  
וּמְרִדָּף רִיקִים יִשְׁבַּע-רִישׁ:    And whoever pursues empty things is satiated with poverty. (28.19)

This is closely related to the opening v. of the short poem that explicitly parallels the lackheart with the sluggard (24.30-34). The poem begins with these lines:

עַל-שָׂדֵה אִישׁ-עֲצֵל עָבַרְתִּי    I went past the field of the sluggard  
וְעַל-פָּרֶם אָדָם חָסֵר-לֵב:    And the vineyard of a man who lacked a heart (24.30)

His laziness meant that his fields were filled with thistles and nettles because they had been left untended. It also meant that the wall around his cultivated ground was broken down (24.31) so that his fields and vineyards lay open to both thieves and wild animals. Since he had no crops to eat, barter, or sell, he would inevitably become poor (24.34a; the same word that ends 28.19), lacking what he needed for life, especially life in an agrarian community<sup>17</sup> (24.34b; the noun *machsor*).

Lacking a heart can lead one to surrender to sexual passion that leads to adultery (6.32) to entangle oneself in someone else's business affairs (17.18), or to fail to organize one's priorities so that that which is necessary is done in its time, whether because one is pursuing things that are "empty" or because one is (merely) lazy (12.11 (28.19); 24.30).

3. Three antithetical sayings describe or allude to the speech that comes from a lack of heart (10.21, 13; 11.12). Proverbs 10.21 is an example of an "asymmetrical antithetical" proverb, a saying in which the (two) lines set forth a contrast (hence "antithetical"), but the contrast is indirect (hence "asymmetrical").<sup>18</sup> A helpful heuristic device is to arrange the lines vertically and supply the "missing" antonyms, even if only by negating the positive terms. (Supplied phrases are in *italics*).

<p>שִׁפְתֵי צַדִּיק יִרְעוּ רַבִּים וְאִוִּילִים בַּחֲסֵר-לֵב יָמוּתוּ:</p>	<p>The lips of the righteous feed many, But fools die in [their] lacking a heart. (10.21)</p>
<p>The lips of the righteous, <i>The righteous have a heart</i> feed many <i>and (so) live</i></p>	<p>But fools die <i>Fools cannot feed (even) themselves</i> in [their] lacking a heart <i>because their words [lips] are unrighteous</i></p>

Those who have a heart (the righteous) speak in a way that blesses ("feeds") many; their ability to feed others implies that they are also able to provide for themselves, in contrast with the fools, who—because they have no heart—starve, either spiritually or physically (or both), being unable even to feed themselves. Not only is having a heart necessary in order to say what is good and right and just, but lacking a heart means that one starves others as well as oneself, so that one's own life becomes self-destructive, even to the point of death.

בְּשִׁפְתֵי נְבוֹן תִּמְצָא חָכְמָה    On the lips of the discerning, wisdom is found  
וְשִׁבְט לִגּוֹ חָסֵר-לֵב:    But a rod is for the back of one who lacks a heart (10.13)

<sup>17</sup>There is no suggestion, i.e., that he ignored his agrarian property in order to pursue merchandising, or manufacturing (e.g., pottery-making, "ironworking"), or some other income-producing pursuit. Ignoring his fields and vineyard—whatever his reason—will impoverish him.

<sup>18</sup>A symmetrical antithetical proverb uses antonyms, e.g., "A wise son makes his father rejoice / A foolish son is his mother's grief" (10.1b-c), in which the contrasts are "wise/foolish" and "rejoice/grief" (even though the first is a verb and the second a noun). "Father/mother" is a standard parallelizing device; it is not contrasting the father and mother. I.e., it does not imply that only fathers rejoice or only mothers grieve.

The lines contrast with each other, but the contrast is indirect: being beaten with a rod is not the opposite of wise speech, so we again arrange the verse vertically and supply what is “missing”.

On the lips of the discerning <i>one who has a heart</i> wisdom is found <i>is not beaten with a rod</i>	But a rod is for the back <i>wisdom is not found</i> of one who lacks a heart <i>on the lips of the undiscerning</i>
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Proverbs 10.13 implies that to lack a heart means that one cannot speak well (i.e., there is no wisdom “on one’s lips”) because lacking a heart means that one lacks the discernment that makes wise speech possible (cf. 10.21). The third proverb that links the lack of a heart with one’s speech makes the same point, as the vertical arrangement shows.

In Pr 11.12 the contrast is even more oblique, and perhaps less clearly defined:

בְּזֹלְרָעָהּ חָסַר-לֵב וְאִישׁ תְּבוּנוֹת יַחֲרִישׁ:	Whoever despises his neighbor lacks a heart, But a man of understanding is silent. (11.12)
Whoever despises his neighbor <i>is not silent</i> lacks a heart <i>is not a man of understanding</i>	But a man of understanding <i>A man who has a heart</i> is silent <i>does not despise his neighbour</i>

Here it appears that someone who lacks a heart not only despises, but rails against, his neighbour—he does not and will not be silent, but rather complains and accuses, unlike the understanding person, who bears the “slings and arrows of misfortune” with calm and silence, if not equanimity. Lacking a heart means that one lacks understanding, a lack that leads to being unable to control one’s words.

Solomon says that lackhearts cannot control their speech, which is so foolish that it helps (“feeds”) no one (10.21), leads to their being beaten for their words (11.12) and sets them at enmity with those around them (10.13). This should not surprise us, since we know from other passages that “the heart of the wise teaches his lips” (16.23a), whereas the wicked who with “perversity in his heart devises evil all the time and spreads strife” (6:14); and “the mouth speaks out of what fills the heart” (Mt 12.34).

4. In yet another asymmetrical antithetical proverb, we read that to lack a heart means not only that one is a fool, but that folly delights the “lackheart”—it is his “joy” (15.21), which contrasts (indirectly) with the “straight” or “upright” path of the discerning: To lack a heart is thus to lack the discernment that enables one to live an upright life that revels in the joy of the wisdom that leads to such a life:

אֵוֶלֶת שִׂמְחָה לְחָסַר-לֵב וְאִישׁ-תְּבוּנָה יֵישֵׁר-לְכָת:	Folly is joy to one who lacks a heart, But a discerning man walks straight. (15.21)
Folly is joy <i>he walks crookedly</i> <i>(wisdom is not joy)</i> <sup>19</sup> to one who lacks a heart <i>who is not discerning</i>	But a discerning man <i>one who has a heart</i> walks straight <i>wisdom is joy</i> <i>(folly is not joy)</i>

5. The final proverb that describes one who lacks a heart again implies that he or she is a fool, but then asks why a fool has the price of wisdom.

<sup>19</sup>The second supplied line contains a more closely defined, slightly less interpretative contrast.

לְמַה־זֶּה מְחִיר בְּיַד־כָּסִיל      Why is there a price in the hand of a fool:  
 לְקִנּוֹת חֲכָמָה וְלֵב־אֵין:      To buy wisdom when there is no heart? (17.16)

Throughout his book of proverbs, Solomon reiterates the idea that it is inappropriate for fools to have anything good or to receive good (17.7; 19.10, such as honour or praise (cf., e.g, 26.1, 8). And a fool who “learns” a proverb without learning from it will find it as useful for life as a lame man finds his legs for walking or running (26.7); it may even do more harm than good (26.9).

At the same time, this verse suggests that even if it were meaningful to talk about “buying” wisdom, and even if a fool had saved his silver until he had enough to meet the “asking price”, his lack of heart would make his purchase of no avail, like someone who payed the bill and then left the store with an empty bag or cart—the “wisdom” that he had “bought” would do him as much good.

To lack a heart thus means that one is not merely a fool, but that one actively delights in folly (15.21), to such an extent that the fool may have what he or she thinks is the price of wisdom, but has it to no avail, since there is no point to his purchasing what he cannot use, since (by definition) a fool is unable to listen to, learn from, or profit by wisdom, as many proverbs state directly or imply

### Summary

Although Solomon never explicitly defines “lack of heart”, his descriptions of the consequences of lacking a heart enables us to suggest that to lack a heart means to be *naïf*, lacking experience, so that one is prone to foolish decisions, including decisions that lead to ultimately destructive behaviour, whether that consists of committing adultery, “cosigning” on someone’s behalf, speaking foolishly, or delighting in folly as an end in itself.

Is this situation irreversible?

Proverbs 17.16 certainly seems to suggest that it is, since a lackheart cannot buy wisdom even if he has its price (the meaning of which is a question for another day). And the tenor of the book is that there is no hope for fools, since they refuse to learn (, reject correction and instruction (1.7).<sup>20</sup>

There is, however, hope. This lack can, however, be overcome by willingness to learn from one’s experiences, and to being corrected, but primarily by attending to the state of one’s “soul”, as two of Solomon’s sayings suggest.

<sup>20</sup>Nor should we interpret Pr 26.12 (“You see a man wise in his eyes; a fool has more hope than he”) as saying that there is hope that fools can become wise. Its point is rather that self-satisfaction is so horrific a folly that the self-satisfied have no hope.

## TO “ACQUIRE A HEART”

A person’s attitude toward her or his (own) soul<sup>21</sup> seems to determine whether or not one “lacks” or is “acquiring” a heart. Solomon identifies these as either “despising” or “loving” one’s soul (15.32; 19.8).

### *Proverbs 15.32*

This saying is asymmetrically antithetical, since “loving” and “acquiring” are not antonyms, even though they contrast (we acquire those things that we desire; this desire may be a step, at least, toward love):

פּוֹרֵעַ מוֹסֵר מוֹאֵס נַפְשׁוֹ	Whoever neglects discipline despises his soul
וְשׁוֹמֵעַ תּוֹכַחַת קוֹנֵה לֵב:	but whoever listens to correction acquires a heart (15.32)
Whoever neglects discipline	but whoever listens to correction
does not listen to correction	does not neglect discipline
despises his soul	acquires a heart
does not acquire a heart	loves his soul

The asymmetrical antithesis of this proverb suggests just what characterizes the lackheart: he neglects discipline, refusing to listen to correction because he does not care about his own spiritual or moral well-being (nor, by implication, does he care about the moral or spiritual welfare of others), and so demonstrates that he despises his inner person.

There may be many environmental or personal reasons for this that the proverb does not address.<sup>22</sup> It aims at the root cause: the lack of a heart and his refusal to address that lack by humbling himself by being willing to be corrected and by working at the discipline or instruction necessary in order to acquire a heart.

Perhaps this is what the *naïf* require to pass from *naïveté* to wisdom: not merely experience itself, but the willingness to admit that they are not omniscient, that they need to learn from their experiences, that their understanding is limited, and that they require correction—to be taught by others as well as by their own lives—in order to become wise.

### *Proverbs 19.8*

The second (and only other) proverb that discusses getting a heart identifies the opposite attitude: this person loves his (own) soul and so pays attention to the teachings of those with insight and understanding so that he may pursue what is good.

קוֹנֵה לֵב אֱהָב נַפְשׁוֹ	Whoever acquires a heart loves his [own] soul
שׁוֹמֵר תְּבוּנָה לְמִצְאָ-טוֹב:	Whoever observes insight in order to find good (19.8)

## Summary

These two verses together suggest that the process of acquiring a heart, the process that becomes one’s passage from the ignorance (innocency) of youthful *naïveté*, begins with one’s attitude toward one’s own spiritual and moral well-

<sup>21</sup>Although I use the word “soul”, this is without prejudging the nature of that entity in the mind of Iron Age Israelites. The noun *nefeš* seems to refer to one’s inner being, so that it is sometimes used in a way that seems to correspond to the English words ending in “-self” (“oneself, himself, herself”, &c.). It is in this rather generic and undefined way that I am using in this brief paper. More would entail at least a small book!

<sup>22</sup>Solomon rarely addresses the cause or motivation *per se* of an action, describing instead the action itself and its outcome. Even texts such as Pr 26.23-26, which warn that someone who appears to be friendly (“speaks graciously”) may be filled with hate, only describe him as “one who hates”, without assigning a cause or motive to the hatred. Behaviour may dissemble, but it always flows from the heart.

being, or (in a word) concern for one's soul. Those who are never taught that the care of their inner person is their own responsibility, and who are not instructed that—in order to become fully human, as they were created to be—they must submit to discipline and correction, will be prone to neglect their inner person, living a life of *naïveté* and ignorance, focused on external affairs. Solomon equates this neglect with self-hatred—they neither realize nor care that they are headed for destruction.

## CONCLUSION

And thus we come at last(!) to the point of beginning to understand the importance of the heart in proverbial wisdom: the heart is that which determines the course of our lives, and where we “end up” (Pr 4.23).<sup>23</sup> And so we are to “guard, keep, watch” our heart with all diligence (4.23); we are to “give” it to our parents and teachers (23.26) for safekeeping. And we are to accept the discipline and correction that the LORD brings into our lives, knowing that he does this for our good, as beloved children (3.11-12).

This paper thus ends rather sermonically, or (at least) devotionally. But that is the end to which the book of Proverbs drives us, as Solomon seems to have intended: who we are is more important than what we do, because it determines, in the end, what we think, say, and do, and because the end is, after all, most important.

Respectfully,  
*Frederic Clarke Putnam*  
 Trinity MMXI

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<sup>23</sup>The noun *to'ts'ot* (“outer limits”, “ends”, “extremities”) occurs twenty-three times (Appendix F), always in the plural (as in Pr 4.23); in all but two of those occurrences it refers to the end of a border or its measure, either tribal boundaries (Nu 34.4, 5, 8, 9, 12; Js 15:4, 7, 11; 16.3, 8; 17.9, 18; 18.12, 14, 19; 19.14, 22, 29, 33; 1 Chr 5.16) or, in Ezekiel's vision of the temple and city, to the measurement of the city wall (Ezk 48.30). Only its two poetic occurrences are non-literal (Ps 68.21; Pr 4.23); the meaning of “end-point” or “limit” fits both of those passages as well.

In Pr 4.23, the grammatical structure of the phrase “the heart's extremity/end” exactly parallels that of “the border's extremity/end” in five passages (Nu 34.8; Js 15.4, 11; 18.19; 19.22).<sup>23</sup> This suggests that its metaphoric use expects the reader of Pr 4.23 to assume its [usual] geopolitical reference (as in Ps 68.21), so that Pr 4.23 refers primarily to the outcome of one's life will—where we “end up”—rather than to its manner. Although these ideas are closely related, they are not identical: our choice of route determines our destination, whereas our destination guides—but does not determine—the route that we travel to reach it—there is rarely only one route to a given location.

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### *Lexica*

BDB. Ad loc.

KBL<sup>3</sup>. Ad loc.

NIDOTTE. Ad loc.

TDOT. Ad loc.

TWOT. Ad loc.

## APPENDIX

- A. Lacking a Heart (all biblical occurrences; only in Proverbs)
    - A1. Prosodic Analysis of Verses Using the Phrase “Lacking a Heart”
  - B. “Lack” in Proverbs (all occurrences in Pr)
    - B1. The Noun *machsor* (מַחֲסוֹר) in Biblical Hebrew
  - C. The Proverbial “Heart” (all occurrences in Pr)
    - C1. The Heart of the Wicked in Proverbs
  - D. “Acquire” in Proverbs (all occurrences of *qnh*, קָנָה in Pr)
    - D1. Acquiring a Heart (Prosodic Analysis)
  - E. “Pursuit” in Proverbs (all occurrences of *rdf*/רָדַף in Pr)
  - F. “Ends/Borders” in Biblical Hebrew (all occurrences of *tots’ot*/תְּוִצְאוֹת in Biblical Hebrew)
  - G. “Simple, naïf” (פְּתִי) in Biblical Hebrew
- N.B.: These appendices are included in order to allow interested readers to pursue the line(s) of inquiry raised by this paper. Data may be incomplete or (relatively) cryptic, not for obfuscation, but because these are “working” appendices, subject to ongoing revision and correction.

## A. "LACKING A HEART" (all biblical occurrences; all in Proverbs)

= *naïveté*

	וַאֲרָא בַפְתָּאִים	And I saw among the naïve,	
7.7	בְּבָנִים נָעַר חֲסֵר־לֵב: אֲבִינָה	I discerned among the sons a young man lacking a heart,	
	מִי־פָתִי	Who is naïve?	
9.4	יִסֵּר הִנֵּה	He should turn here!	
	חֲסֵר־לֵב אָמְרָה לוֹ:	To one lacking a heart she says,	
	לָכוּ	Come!	
9.5	לֶחְמוּ בִלְחֵמִי	Eat my bread!	naïf/simple
	וּשְׁתּוּ בֵּינַי מִסִּכְתִּי:	And drink the wine I have mixed!	
	מִי־פָתִי	Who is naïve?	
9.16	יִסֵּר הִנֵּה	He should turn here!	
	חֲסֵר־לֵב אָמְרָה לוֹ:	To one lacking a heart she says,	
9.17	מַיִם־גְּנוּבִים יִמְתְּקוּ	Stolen waters are sweet	
	וְלֶחֶם סֵתֵרִים יִנְעֵם:	And secret bread is pleasant	
→ self-destruction			
6.32	נֶאֱפָ אִשָּׁה חֲסֵר־לֵב	Whoever commits adultery with a woman is lacking a heart;	→ adultery
	מִשְׁחִית נַפְשׁוֹ הוּא יַעֲשֶׂנָה:	Whoever destroys his soul does it.	→ destroying soul
10.21	שִׁפְתֵי צַדִּיק יִרְעוּ רַבִּים	The lips of the righteous feed many,	≈ folly → inability (failure?/refusal?)
	וְאוֹיְלִים בְּחֲסֵר־לֵב יָמוּתוּ:	But fools die in the lack of a heart.	to feed others (& oneself?) → death
→ self-entrapment			
17.18	אָדָם חֲסֵר־לֵב תּוֹקַע כֶּף	A man who lacks a heart pledges	→ pledging/becoming guarantor
	עֶרֶב עֲרוּבָה לְפָנָי רֵעֵהוּ:	And becomes guarantor before his neighbor.	
→ hunger (starvation?)			
12.11	עֹבֵד אֲדָמָתוֹ יִשְׂבַּע־לֶחֶם	Whoever works his land is satiated with bread,	→ pursuit/emptinesses
	מְרַדֵּף רִיקִים חֲסֵר־לֵב:	And whoever pursues empty things lacks a heart.	→ not working → hunger
28.19	כִּי עֹבֵד אֲדָמָתוֹ יִצְדַּב־לֶיֶט	Whoever works his land is satiated with bread,	→ pursuit/emptinesses
	וּמְסַרְדֵּף רִקְוֹ יִצְדַּב־רִישׁ	And whoever pursues empty things is satiated with poverty.	→ not working → poverty
24.30	עַל־שָׂדֵה אִישׁ־עֵצָל עִבְרָתִי	I passed the field of the sluggard	→ laziness → destruction of property → hunger
	וְעַל־כֶּרֶם אָדָם חֲסֵר־לֵב:	And the vineyard of a man who lacked a heart,	

→ foolish speech/words			
10.13	בְּשִׁפְתֵי נְבוֹן תִּמְצָא חֵכְמָה וְשִׁבְט לִגְו חֶסֶד לֵב: בְּזִלְרַעְהוּ חֶסֶד לֵב וְאִישׁ תְּבוּנֹת יִחְרִישׁ:	On the lips of the discerning, wisdom is found, But a rod is for the back of one who lacks a heart. Whoever despises his neighbor lacks a heart, But a man of understanding keeps silent.	→ no discernment → no wise words → despising others → [foolish] words (not silence)
→ crooked walk/life			
15.21	אֵילַת שְׂמֵחָה לְחֶסֶד לֵב וְאִישׁ תְּבוּנָה יִישַׁר לֶכֶת: Folly is joy to him who lacks a heart, But a discerning man walks straight.	→ folly (from desire for pleasure) [] lacks understanding → crooked walk	
→ frustration			
17.16	לְמָה זֶה מְחִיר בְּיַד כָּסִיל לְקִנּוֹת חֵכְמָה וְלֵב אֵין: Why is there a price in the hand of a fool: To buy wisdom but there is no heart?	≈ folly → desire to buy wisdom → no avail(?)	
Getting a Heart			
15.32a	פּוֹרַע מוֹסֵר מוֹאֵס נַפְשׁוֹ or Whoever neglects discipline despises his soul Whoever despises his soul neglects discipline		
15.32b	וְשׁוֹמֵעַ תּוֹכַחַת קוֹנֵה לֵב: or and whoever listens to correction acquires a heart and whoever acquires a heart listens to correction		
19.8a	קָנָה לֵב אֱהָב נַפְשׁוֹ or Whoever acquires a heart loves his [own] soul Whoever loves his [own] soul acquires a heart—		
19.8b	שָׁמַר תְּבוּנָה לְמַצָּא טוֹב: or Is one who keeps/watches insight by finding good. By finding good one keeps/watches insight.		

A1. PROSODIC ANALYSIS OF VERSES USING THE PHRASE “LACKING A HEART”					
6.32a	נֹאֵף אִשָּׁה חָסֵר-לֵב	a . b	4: 2.2	S[S+P/ptc - O] - PN	
6.32b	מִשְׁחִית נִפְשׁוֹ הוּא יַעֲשֶׂנָה:	c . a <sup>1</sup>	4: 2.2	S[S+P/ptc - O] - P/v+O	3ms QF
7.7a	וְאָרָא בַּפְתָּאִים	a . b	2: 2.2	w+P/v - pp	1cs QPr
7.7b	אֲבִינָה בְּבָנִים נֶעַר חָסֵר-לֵב:	a <sup>1</sup> . b <sup>1</sup> . c	5: 1.1.3	P/v - pp - O	1cs QF
9.4a	מִי־פָתִי יִסֵּר הַנָּה	a . b . c	4: 2.1.1	S - P/v - adv	3ms QF
9.4b	חָסֵר-לֵב אָמְרָה לוֹ:	a <sup>1</sup> . d . e	4: 2.1.1	O - P/v - pp	3fs QP
9.16a	מִי־פָתִי יִסֵּר הַנָּה	a . b . c	4: 2.1.1	S - P/v - adv	3ms QF
9.16b	חָסֵר-לֵב אָמְרָה לוֹ:	a <sup>1</sup> . d . e	4: 2.1.1	O - P/v - pp	3fs QP
10.13a	בְּשִׁפְתֵי נִבּוֹן תִּמְצָא חֲכָמָה	a . b . c	4: 2.1.1	pp - P/v - S	3fs NF
10.13b	וְשָׁבַט לִגּוֹ חָסֵר-לֵב:	d . b <sup>1</sup>	4: 1.3	w+S - pp	
11.12a	בְּזִלְרֵעָהּ חָסֵר-לֵב	a . b	4: 2.2	S[S+P/ptc - pp] - PN	
11.12b	וְאִישׁ תְּבוֹנוֹת יַחֲרִישׁ:	b <sup>1</sup> . a <sup>1</sup>	3: 2.1	w+S - P/v	3ms HF
12.11a	עֲבַד אֲדָמְתוֹ יִשְׁבַּע-לָחֶם	a . b . c	4: 2.1.1	S[S+P/ptc - O] - P/v - O	3ms QF
12.11b	וּמִרְדֵּף רִיקִים חָסֵר-לֵב:	a <sup>1</sup> . d	4: 2.2	w+S[S+P/ptc - O] - PN	
15.21a	אֲוִלַת שְׂמֵחָה לְחָסֵר-לֵב	a . b	4: 2.2	S - pp	
15.21b	וְאִישׁ תְּבוֹנָה יִישֶׁר-לִכְתּוֹ:	b <sup>1</sup> . a <sup>1</sup> . c	4: 2.1.1	w+S - P/v - NC	3ms DF
17.18a	אָדָם חָסֵר-בֵּל תּוֹקַע כָּף	a . b . c	5: 3.1.1	S - P/ptc - O	ms QPtc
17.18b	עָרַב עָרְבָה לְפָנָי רֵעָהוּ:	c <sup>1</sup> . d . e	4: 1.1.2	P/ptc - O - pp	ms QPtc
24.30a	עַל-שָׂדֵה אִישׁ-עֶצֶל עֲבַרְתִּי	a . b	5: 4.1	pp - P/v	1cs QP
24.30b	וְעַל-כָּרְם אָדָם חָסֵר-לֵב:	a <sup>1</sup>	5: 5	w+pp	
חסר in Proverbs (not חָסֵר-בֵּל)					
28.16a	נִגִּיד חָסֵר תְּבוֹנוֹת וְרַב מַעֲשָׂקוֹת	a . b . c	3: 1.2.2	S - P/cc - w+P/cc	
28.16b	שֵׁנָא בְּצַע יֶאֱרִיךְ יָמָיו:	a <sup>1</sup> . d . e	4: 2.1.1	S[S+P/ptc - O] - P/v - O	3ms HF
12.9a	טוֹב נִקְלָה וְעֵבֵד לוֹ	a . b . c	4: 1.1.2	PA - S	
12.9b	מִמֶּתְכַבֵּד וְחָסֵר-לָחֶם:	b <sup>1</sup> . d	3: 1.2	pp - w+P/cc	

B. "LACK" IN PROVERBS (all occurrences in Pr)				
The Root חסר in Proverbs (all occurrences)	Ref.	What is "Lacking"	Result	
A נאף אשה חסר־לב משחית נפשו הוא יִעֲשֶׂנָה:	6.32	לב heart	self-destroyed	
A וְאִרְאָה בַּפְּתָאִים אֲבִינָה בְּבָנִים נֶעַר חֲסֵר־לֵב:	7.7	לב heart	death	
A מִי־פָתִי יֶסֶר הָנָה חֲסֵר־לֵב אֲמַרְה לּוֹ:	9.4	לב heart	wisdom	
A מִי־פָתִי יֶסֶר הָנָה וְחֲסֵר־לֵב וְאֲמַרְה לּוֹ:	9.16	לב heart	folly	
A בְּשִׁפְתַי נִבּוֹן חֲמֻצָא חֲכָמָה וְשִׁבְטִי לִגּוֹ חֲסֵר־לֵב:	10.13	לב heart	rod/beating	
N שִׁפְתַי צָדִיק יִרְעוּ רַבִּים וְאִוִּילִים בְּחֲסֵר־לֵב יָמוּתוּ:	10.21	לב heart	death	
A בּוֹרֵר־לֵב חֲסֵר־לֵב וְאִישׁ חֲבוּנּוֹת יִחְרִישׁ:	11.12	לב heart	foolish speech	
A עֲבַד אֲדָמְתוֹ יִשְׁבַּע־לֶחֶם וּמְרִדֵי רִיקִים חֲסֵר־לֵב:	12.11	לב heart	food	
A אִוִּילֵי שְׂמֵחָה לְחֲסֵר־לֵב וְאִישׁ חֲבוּנּוֹת יִשְׂרֹל־כַּחַת:	15.21	לב heart	folly	
A אָדָם חֲסֵר־לֵב תּוֹקַע כָּף עֲרֵב עֲרֵבָה לְפָנָי רַעְהוּ:	17.18	לב heart	self-snared	
A עַל־שֹׁדֵה אִישׁ־עֶצֶל עֲבָרְתִי וְעַל־כָּרֶם אָדָם חֲסֵר־לֵב:	24.30	לב heart	hunger	
A טוֹב נִקְלָה וְעֲבַד לּוֹ מִמְחַכְכְּבֵד וְחֲסֵר־לֶחֶם:	12.9	לֶחֶם bread/food		
V צָדִיק אֲכַל לְשִׁבְעַת נִפְשׁוֹ וּבִטָּן רְשָׁעִים תִּחְסָר:	13.25	שִׁבְעַת נִפְשׁוֹ satiation	hunger(?)	
A נִגִּיד חֲסֵר חֲבוּנּוֹת וְרַב מַעֲשִׂקוֹת שֹׂא בָצַע יֵאָרִיךְ יָמָיו:	28.16	חֲבוּנּוֹת insight(s)	oppression, short reign	
N נִבְהַל לְהוֹן אִישׁ רַע עֵין וְלֹא יִדַּע כִּי־חֲסֵר יִבְאָנוּ:	28.22	חֲסֵר lack (itself)	poverty	
V בָּטַח בָּהּ לֵב בַּעֲלָהּ וְשָׁלַל לֹא יִחְסָר:	31.11	שָׁלַל plunder, spoil		

1. The root *chsr* (*rsx*) occurs sixteen times in Pr: as substantive adjective (12x), noun (2x), and verb (2x), and eight times as the noun *machsor* (*rsox.m*);, albeit never in the sense of lacking a heart;<sup>24</sup> these passages are germane to this discussion only in that they suggest what one can “lack”, according to Proverbs.
2. The most frequent “lack” is a heart (11x); also lacking are food (12.9; 13.25), wealth (28.22; 31.11), and insight (28.16).

<sup>24</sup>Although this noun does not occur in the collocation under discussion, its use does show that other things can be lacking: in Pr it refers to poverty that is the result of laziness (6.11 // 24.34; 14.23), of a lack of generosity (11.24; cf. 28.27), of the desire for hasty (easy?) wealth (21.5), of prodigality (21.17), and of abusing one’s power for gain (22.16).

Its other five occurrences in Scripture all refer to a lack of material wants or needs. Three of these promise “no lack” (Jg 18.10; 19:19; Ps 34:10), one refers to the lack that is the mark of poverty (Dt 15.8), without addressing its cause; in the fifth, the host tells his guest—the Levite, his concubine, and servant—that any that they lack is “on him” (Jg 19.20).

3. The only negated lack (“lack[s] not”) occurs in 31.11: the husband of the praiseworthy woman does not lack “plunder” or “spoil”, which seems to mean that he has no material lack.

B1. THE NOUN <i>machsor</i> (מַחְסוֹר) IN BIBLICAL HEBREW			
N	וּבֹא-כַמְהֵלֶךְ רֵאשֶׁף וּמַחְסוֹרְךָ כְּאִישׁ מִגֵּן: יש מפורז ונוסף עוד וחושף מישר אף-למחסור:	Pr 6:11	resources
N	בְּכָל-עֶצֶב יְהִי מוֹתֵר וּדְבַר-שִׁפְתַיִם אֶף-לְמַחְסוֹר: מחשבות חרוץ אף-למותר וכל-אין אף-למחסור:	Pr 11:24 Pr 14:23	(wealth) abundance/profit
N	אִישׁ מַחְסוֹר אֶהֱבֵה שְׂמֵחָה אֶהֱבֵה יַיִן-וְשִׁמֶן לֹא יַעֲשִׂיר: איש מחסור אהב שמחה אהב יין-ושמן לא יעשיר:	Pr 21:17	wealth
N	עֵשֶׂק דָּל לְהִרְבוֹת לוֹ נָחַן לַעֲשִׂיר אֶף-לְמַחְסוֹר: עשק דל להרבות לו נחן לעשיר אף-למחסור:	Pr 22:16	wealth
N	וּבֹא מַחְהֵלֶךְ רֵישֶׁף וּמַחְסוֹרְךָ כְּאִישׁ מִגֵּן: איש מחסור נחן לרש אין מחסור ומעלים עיניו רב-מארות:	Pr 24:34 Pr 28:27	poverty nothing
N	כִּי-פָתַח חֲפָתָח אֶת-יָדָיו לֹ וְהֵעֱבַט חַעֲבִיטָנוּ דֵי מַחְסָרוֹ אֲשֶׁר יִחְסַר לוֹ: כי-פתח חפתח את-ידיו ל והעבט חעביטנו די מחסרו אשר יחסר לו:	Dt 15.8	whatever the poor man lacks
N	כִּבְאֲכֶם חָבְאוּ אֶל-עַם בְּטַח וְהָאָרֶץ רַחֲבַת יָדַיִם כִּי-נִתְּנָה אֱלֹהִים בְּיַדְכֶם מְקוֹם אֲשֶׁר אֵין שֵׁם מַחְסוֹר כָּל-דְּבַר אֲשֶׁר בָּאָרֶץ: כבאכם חבאו אל-עם בטח והארץ רחבת ידים כי-נתנה אלהים בידכם מקום אשר אין שם מחסור כל-דבר אשר בארץ:	Jg 18.10	no lack of anything in the land
N	וְגַם-חֲבָן גַּם-מִסְפּוּא יֵשׁ לְחַמּוּרֵינוּ וְגַם לֶחֶם נַיִן יֵשׁ-לִי וְלֹא-מִתְּדָה וְלֹנֵעַר עִם-עֲבָדֶיךָ אֵין מַחְסוֹר כָּל-דְּבַר: וגם-חבן גם-מספוא יש לחמורינו וגם לחם נאין יש-לי ולא-מתדה ולנער עם-עבדיך אין מחסור כל-דבר:	Jg 19:19	no lack there of anything
N	וַיֹּאמֶר הָאִישׁ הַזֶּה הוֹקֵן שְׁלוֹם לְךָ רַק כָּל-מַחְסוֹרְךָ עָלַי רַק בְּרַחוּב אֶל-תֵּלֶךְ: ויאמר האיש הזה הוקן שלום לך רק כל-מחסורך עלי רק ברחוב אל-תלך:	Jg 19.20	“all your lacking is on me”
N	יִרְאוּ אֶת-יְהוָה קִדְשׁוֹ כִּי-אֵין מַחְסוֹר לִירְאָיו: יראו את-יהוה קדשו כי-אין מחסור ליראיו:	Ps 34:10	no lack to those who fear him

The noun *machsor* is used to refer to lack of material goods, such as food; it is not used to describe, e.g., one’s lack of a heart.

## C. THE PROVERBIAL "HEART" (all occurrences in Pr)

## "Heart" in Proverbs 1-9

לְהַקְשִׁיב לְחִכְמָה אֲזַנְךָ תִּטָּה לִבְךָ לְחַבּוֹנָה: כִּי־חִבּוּא חִכְמָה בְּלִבְךָ וְדַעַת לְנַפְשֶׁךָ יִנְעַם: בְּנֵי תוֹרָתִי אַל־תִּשְׁכַּח וּמִצְוֹתַי יִצַר לִבְךָ: חֶסֶד וְאֱמֻנָה אַל־יִעֲזוּבְךָ קְשָׁרֵם עַל־גְּרוֹרוֹתֶיךָ כְּחִבָּם עַל־לוּחַ לִבְךָ: בְּטַח אֶל־יְהוָה בְּכֹל־לִבְךָ וְאַל־בִּינְתֶךָ אַל־תִּשְׁעַן: וַיְרַנֵּי וַיֹּאמֶר לִי יְחַמְדֵּךְ דְּבָרַי לִבְךָ שְׁמַר מִצְוֹתַי וְחַיֵּה: אַל־יִלְיוּ מֵעֵינֶיךָ שְׁמָרֵם בְּחוֹךְ לִבְכֶּךָ: מִכָּל־מִשְׁמַר נֹצַר לִבְךָ כִּי־מִמֶּנּוּ תוֹצְאוֹת חַיִּים: וְאָמַרְתָּ אֵיךְ שָׂנֵאתִי מוֹסֵר וְתוֹכַחַת נֹאֵץ לִבִּי: תִּהְיֶינָה בְּלִבּוֹ חֵרֶשׁ רָע בְּכָל־עֵת מְדַיְנִים יִשְׁלַח: לֵב חֵרֶשׁ מַחְשְׁבוֹת אֲנִן רַגְלִים מְמַהְרֹת לְרוּץ לְרָעָה: קְשָׁרֵם עַל־לִבְךָ תָּמִיד עֲנֵדֵם עַל־גְּרוֹתֶךָ: אַל־תִּחְמַד יִפְיָהּ בְּלִבְכֶּךָ וְאַל־תִּקְחֶךָ בְּעַפְעָפִיָּה: נֹאֶף אִשָּׁה חֹסֵר־לֵב מַשְׁחִית נַפְשׁוֹ הוּא יַעֲשֶׂנָה: קְשָׁרֵם עַל־אַצְבְּעוֹתֶיךָ כְּחִבָּם עַל־לוּחַ לִבְךָ: וְאַרְאָ בְּפִתְאִים אֲבִינָה בְּבָנִים נֶעַר חֹסֵר־לֵב: וְהִנֵּה אִשָּׁה לִקְרָאתוֹ שֵׂית זֹנָה וְנֹצֶרֶת לֵב: אַל־יִשָּׂט אֶל־דְּרָכֶיהָ לִבְךָ אַל־תִּתַּע בְּנִתְיֹבוֹתֶיהָ: הִבִּינוּ פְּתָאִים עֲרָמָה וְכַסִּילִים הִבִּינוּ לֵב: מִי־פְתִי יִסֵּר הִנֵּה חֹסֵר־לֵב אָמְרָה לוֹ: מִי־פְתִי יִסֵּר הִנֵּה וְחֹסֵר־לֵב וְאָמְרָה לוֹ:	2.2 by making your ear attend wisdom you will turn your heart to insight 2.10 for wisdom enters your heart and knowledge is pleasant to your soul 3.1 My son, forget not my teaching and your heart will guard my commands 3.3 Chesed and truth must not forsake you; bind them on your neck; write them on the tablet of your heart 3.5 Trust in Yhwh with your whole heart and on your insight lean not 4.4 and he taught me and he said to me Your heart must grasp my words Keep my commands and live 4.21 They must not depart from your eyes Keep them in your heart 4.23 from-all-of prison guard! your-heart for from-him terminations/boundaries-of life 5.12 &-you-said how I hated discipline &-rebuke he-despised my-heart 6.14 perversities in-his-heart ploughing-one-of evil in-all-of time strifes he-sends[away] 6.18 heart-of ploughing-one thoughts-of wickedness feet hastening-ones to-run to-evil 6.21 bind!-them upon your-heart always bind!-them upon your-necks 6.25 not you-desire her-beauty in-your-heart &-not she-takes-you in-her-eyelids 6.32 adulterying-one woman lacking-one-of heart destroying-one his-soul he he-makes-her 7.3 bind!-them upon your-necks write!-them upon tablet-of your-heart 7.7 &-I-saw in-the-naïf-ones I-discern in-the-sons young man lacking-one-of heart 7.10 &-behold! woman to-meet-him garment-of unfaithful-one &-guarded-one-of heart 7.25 not he-turns unto her-ways your-heart not you-wander-lost in-her-paths 8.5 discern! naïf-ones prudence &-fools discern heart 9.4 who simple-one he-turns-aside to-here lacking-one-of heart she-said to-him 9.16 who simple-one he-turns-aside to-here lacking-one-of heart she-said to-him
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“Heart” in Proverbs 10-15

חַכְּם־לֵב יִקַּח מִצְוֹת וְאֹוִיל שִׁפְתָיִם יִלְבֹּט:	10.8	wise-of heart he-takes commands &-foolish-one-of lips he-thrusts-down
בְּשִׁפְתָי נִבּוֹן הַמַּצָּא חֲכָמָה וְשִׁבְטֵי לִגְוֹ חֲסֵר־לֵב:	10.13	in-lips-of discerning she-is-found wisdom &-rod for-back-of lacking-one-of heart
כֶּסֶף נִבְחָר לְשׁוֹן צַדִּיק לֵב רָשָׁעִים כַּמַּעֵט:	10.20	silver chosen-one tongue-of innocent heart-of wicked like-little
שִׁפְתָי צַדִּיק יִרְעוּ רַבִּים וְאֹוִילִים בְּחֲסֵר־לֵב יָמוּתוּ:	10.21	lips-of innocent they-shepherd many-ones &-fools in-lack-of-heart they-die
בְּזִלְזוּתוֹ חֲסֵר־לֵב וְאִישׁ חֲבוּנוֹת יִחְרִישׁ:	11.12	despising-one to-his-neighbour lacking-one-of heart &-man-of insights he-is-silent
חֹזֵעַת יְהוָה עֲקָשִׁי־לֵב וְרִצּוֹנוֹ הַמִּימִי דְרֹךְ:	11.20	abomination-of Yhwh twisted-ones-of heart &-his-pleasure perfect-ones-of way
עוֹכֵר בֵּיתוֹ יִנְחַל־רוּחַ וְעַבְדֹּ אֹוִיל לְחַכְּם־לֵב:	11.29	troubling-one-of his-house he-inherits wind &-servant-of fool to-wise-of heart
לְפִי־שָׂכְלוֹ יִהְלֵל־אִישׁ וְנִעְוָה־לֵב יִהְיֶה לְבוֹז:	12.8	according-to his-success he-is-praised man &-deviating-one-of heart he-is for-contempt.
עַבְדֹּ אֲדָמְתוֹ יִשְׂבַּע־לֶחֶם וּמְרַדֵּף רֵיקִים חֲסֵר־לֵב:	12.11	serving-one his-ground he-is-satiated food &-pursuing-one empty-ones lacking-one-of heart
מִרְמָה בְּלֵב־חֲרָשֵׁי רָע וְלִיעֲצֵי שְׁלוֹם שִׂמְחָה:	12.20	deceit in-heart-of ploughers-of evil &-to-counselors-of peace joy
אָדָם עָרוּם כֹּסֵה דַעַת וְלֵב כְּסִילִים יִקְרָא אֹוִלָּה:	12.23	man prudent-one covering knowledge &-heart-of fools he-calls “Folly!”
דָּאֲגָה בְּלֵב־אִישׁ יִשְׁחַנָּה וְדָבָר טוֹב יִשְׂמַחָנָה:	12.25	anxiety in-heart-of man he-bows-her-down &-word good-one he-makes-her-rejoice
חֹחַלָּת מִמַּשְׁכָּה מִחֲלָה־לֵב וְעֵץ חַיִּים חֲאֻוָּה בָּאָה:	13.12	hope dragged-out-one sickness heart &-tree-of life desire coming-one
לֵב יוֹדֵעַ מִרַת נַפְשׁוֹ וּבְשִׂמְחָתוֹ לֹא יִתְעַרֵּב זָר:	14.10	heart knowing-one bitterness-of his-soul &-in-his-joy not he-takes-in-pledge stranger
גַּם־בְּשִׂחוֹךְ יִכָּאֵב־לֵב וְאַחֲרֵיתָהּ שִׂמְחָה חוֹגָה:	14.13	also in-laughter he-is-pained heart &-her-end happiness grief
מִדְרָכָיו יִשְׂבַּע סוּג לֵב וּמַעֲלָיו אִישׁ טוֹב:	14.14	from-his-ways he-is-satiated backslider-of heart &-from-upon-him man good
חַיִּי בְּשָׂרִים לֵב מִרְפָּא וְרִקְבֵי עֲצָמוֹת קִנְאָה:	14.30	life-of fleshes heart healing-one &-rottenness-of bones jealousy
בְּלֵב נִבּוֹן תְּנוּחַ חֲכָמָה וּבְקִרְבֵי כְּסִילִים תִּוְדָע:	14.33	in-heart-of discerning-one she-rests wisdom &-among foolish-ones she-is-known
דָּשׁ־פִּדְתִי צַדִּיקִי מִיִּזְרוּ וְדָדָהָת וְדָלֵב: כַּדְּסִידֵלִי לֹא־דָכָה:	15.7a	lips-of wise-ones/m they-winnow knowledge
וְדָלֵב: כַּדְּסִידֵלִי לֹא־דָכָה:	15.7b	&-heart-of foolish-ones/m not thus
שֵׁאֵל דָּוָאֲבָדָא מִנְּמַגְד יְהוָה דָּא דְכִי־דְלָבָאֵת: בְּדִנֵי־דָּאֲדָר:	15.11a	Sheol &-Abaddon before Yhwh
דָּלֵב דְּטַדְּמָדָּצ דְּיִידְחָב דְּפָדְנִי וּבְדָהָ: שִׁדְּבַת־דָּלֵב רֹדָּצ. נְדָכָדָּאֵת:	15.13a	heart rejoices he-is-good faces
דָּלֵב *נִבָּא. יִדְּבַם־קִשְׁ־דְּדָהָת וּפָדְנִי: כַּדְּסִידֵלִי דְּיִ. רַמְסָה דָּאִמּוּמֵלֵת:	15.13b	&-in-pain-of heart spirit stricken-one
דָּלֵב *נִבָּא. יִדְּבַם־קִשְׁ־דְּדָהָת וּפָדְנִי: כַּדְּסִידֵלִי דְּיִ. רַמְסָה דָּאִמּוּמֵלֵת:	15.14a	heart-of discerning-one/m he-seeks knowledge
דָּלֵב *נִבָּא. יִדְּבַם־קִשְׁ־דְּדָהָת וּפָדְנִי: כַּדְּסִידֵלִי דְּיִ. רַמְסָה דָּאִמּוּמֵלֵת:	15.14b	&-face-of foolish-ones/m he-feeds folly
דָּלֵב *נִבָּא. יִדְּבַם־קִשְׁ־דְּדָהָת וּפָדְנִי: כַּדְּסִידֵלִי דְּיִ. רַמְסָה דָּאִמּוּמֵלֵת:	15.15a	all-of days-of afflicted-one/m bad-ones/m
דָּלֵב *נִבָּא. יִדְּבַם־קִשְׁ־דְּדָהָת וּפָדְנִי: כַּדְּסִידֵלִי דְּיִ. רַמְסָה דָּאִמּוּמֵלֵת:	15.15b	&-good-of heart drinking-feast-of perpetuity
דָּלֵב *נִבָּא. יִדְּבַם־קִשְׁ־דְּדָהָת וּפָדְנִי: כַּדְּסִידֵלִי דְּיִ. רַמְסָה דָּאִמּוּמֵלֵת:	15.21a	folly-of joy to-lacking-one-of heart
דָּלֵב *נִבָּא. יִדְּבַם־קִשְׁ־דְּדָהָת וּפָדְנִי: כַּדְּסִידֵלִי דְּיִ. רַמְסָה דָּאִמּוּמֵלֵת:	15.21b	&-man-of insight he-makes-straight to-go

לב צדיק יהנה לענות	15.28a	hear-of innocent-one he-meditates to-answer
ופי רשעים יביע רעות:	15.28b	&-mouth-of guilty-ones he-flows evils
מאור-עינים ישמח-לב	15.30a	light-bearer-of eyes he-makes-rejoice heart
שמועה טובה תדשן-עצם:	15.30b	report good-one she-fattens bone
פורע מוסר מואס נפשו	15.32a	releasing-one-of discipline despising-one his-soul
ושומע תוכחת קונה לב:	15.32b	&-hearing-one-of correction getting-one heart

“Heart” in Proverbs 16.1-22.16

לאדם מערכי-לב	16.1	to-man arrangements-of heart
ומיהנה מענה לשון:		&-from-Yhwh answer-of tongue
חועבת יהנה כל-גבה-לב	16.5	abomination-of Yhwh all-of high-one-of heart
יד ליד לא ינקה:		hand to-hand not he-be-exempt/free/innocent
לב אדם יחשב דרכו	16.9	heart-of man he-thinks his-way
ויהנה יכין צעדו:		&-Yhwh he-establishes his-step
לחכם-לב יקרא נבון	16.21	to-wise-one-of heart he-is-called discerning
ומחק שפתיים יסיף לקח:		&-bridle-of lips he-adds instruction
לב חכם ישכיל פיהו	16.23	heart-of wise-one he-ponders his-mouth
ועל-שפתיו יסיף לקח:		&-upon his-lips he-adds instruction
מצרף לכסף	17.3	crucible for-the-silver
וכור לזהב		&-furnace for-the-gold
ובחן לבות יהנה:		&-testing-one hearts Yhwh
למה-זה מחיר ביד-כסיל	17.16	for-what this price in-hand-of fool
לקנות חכמה		to-acquire wisdom
ולב-אין:		&-heart there-is-not
אדם חסר-לב חוקע כף	17.18	man lacking-one-of heart striking-one-of hand
ערב ערבה לפני רעהו:		pledging-one pledge before his-neighbour
עקש-לב לא ימצא טוב	17.20	twisted-one-of heart not he-finds good
ונהפך בלשונו יפול ברעה:		&-overthrown-one in-his-tongue he-falls in-evil
לב שמח ייטב גהה	17.22	heart rejoicing-one he-is-good healing/cure
ורוח נכאה תיבש-גרם:		&-spirit stricken-one she-dries-up bone
לא-יחפץ כסיל בחבונה	18.2	not he-delights fool in-insight
כי אם-בהתגלות לבו:		for if [but] in-revealing his-heart
לפני-שבר יגבה לב-איש	18.12	before shattering he-is-high heart-of man
ולפני כבוד ענוה:		&-before glory affliction
לב נבון יקנה-דעת	18.15	heart-of discerning-one he-acquires knowledge
ואזן חכמים תבקש-דעת:		&-ear-of wise-ones she-seeks knowledge
אולת אדם תסלף דרכו	19.3	folly-of man she-overturns his-way
ועל-יהנה יזעף לבו:		&-upon Yhwh he-rages his-heart
קנה-לב אהב נפשו	19.8	acquiring-one-of heart loving-one-of his-soul
שמר חבונה למצא-טוב:		watching-one-of insight to-find good
רבות מחשבות בלב-איש	19.21	many thoughts in-heart-of man
ועצת יהנה היא תקום:		&-counsel-of Yhwh she she-rises
מים עמקים עצה בלב-איש	20.5	water deep-ones counsel in-heart-of man
ואיש חבונה ידלנה:		&-man-of insight he-draws-her
מי-יאמר	20.9	who-he-says
זכיתי לבי		I-cleaned my-heart
טהרתי מחטאתי:		I-am-clean from-my-sin
פלגי-מים לב-מלך ביד-יהנה	21.1	ditches-of water heart-of king in-hand-of Yhwh
על-כל-אשר יחפץ יטנו:		upon all-of which he-delights he-turns-him
כל-דרך-איש ישר בעיניו	21.2	all-of way-of man straight in-his-eyes
וחכן לבות יהנה:		&-measuring-one-of hearts Yhwh

רום-עינים ורחב-לב גר רשעים חטאת:	21.4	high-one-of eyes &-wide-one-of heart lamp-of wicked-ones sin
אהב טהור- {טהר-} לב חן שפתיו רעהו מלך:	22.11	loving-one clean-one-of heart favour his-lips his-neighbour king
אולת קשורה בלב-נער שבת מוסר ירחיקנה ממנו:	22.15	folly bound-one in-heart-of youth rod-of discipline he-makes-her-far from-him
<b>“Heart” in Proverbs 22.17-24.34</b>		
הט אזנך ושמע דברי חכמים ולבך חשיח לדעת:	22.17	turn! your-ear &-hear! words-of wise-ones &-your-heart you-set to-my-knowledge
כי כמו-שער בנפשו כן-הוא אכל ושתה יאמר לך ולבו בל-עמך:	23.7	for like he-thought in-his-soul thus he eat! &-drink! he-says to-you &-his-heart not with-you
הביאה למוסר לבך ואזנך לאמרי-דעת:	23.12	bring! to-the-discipline your-heart &-your-ear to-words-of knowledge
בני אם-חכם לבך ישמח לבי גם-אני:	23.15	my-son if wise-one your-heart he-makes-rejoice my-heart also I
אל-קנא לבך בחטאים כי אם-ביראת-יהוה כל-היום:	23.17	not he-envies your-heart in-the-sins for im [but] in-fear-of Yhwh all-of the-days
שמע-אתה בני וחכם	23.19	listen! you my-son &-be-wise!
ואשר בדרך לבך תנה בני לבך לי ועיניך דרכי תרצנה {תצרנה}:	23.26	&-go! in-the-way your-heart give! my-son your-heart to-me &-your-eyes my-ways they-guard
עיניך יראו זרות ולבך ידבר תהפכות:	23.33	your-eyes they-see strange-ones &-your-heart he-speaks plans
והיית כשכב בלב-ים וכשכב בראש חבל:	23.34	&-you-are like-sleeping-one in-heart-of sea &-like-sleeping-one in-head-of cord
כי-שר יהגה לבם ועמל שפתיהם תדברנה:	24.2	for ruin he-meditates their-heart &-toil their-lips they-speak
כי-חאמר חן לא-ידענו זה הלא-תכן לבות הוא-יבין ונצר נפשך הוא ידע והשיב לאדם כפעלו:	24.12	for you-say behold not we-knew this ?not measuring-one-of hearts he he-discerns &-guarding-one-of your-soul he he-knows &-he-returns to-man like-his-deed
בנפל אויבך {אויבך} אל-תשמח ובכשלו אל-יגל לבך:	24.17	in-falling-of your-enemies/y not you-rejoice &-in-his-stumbling not he-exults your-heart
על-שדה איש-עצל עברתי ועל-כרם אדם חסר-הלב:	24.30	upon field-of man lazy-one I-passed &-upon vineyard-of man lacking-one-of heart
ואחזה אנכי אשית לבי ראיתי לקחתי מוסר:	24.32	&-I-looked I I-set my-heart I-saw I-took discipline
<b>“Heart” in Proverbs 25-29</b>		
שמים לרום וארץ לעמק ולב מלכים אין חקר:	25.3	heaven for-height &-earth for-depth &-heart-of kings there-is-not searching
מעדה בגד ביום קרה חמץ על-נתר ושר בשרים על לב-רע:	25.20	stripping-one garment on-day cold-one vinegar upon nitre(?) &-singing-one in-the-songs upon heart evil-one

כֶּסֶף סִיגִים מְצֻפָּה עַל־חֶרֶשׁ שִׁפְתֵימָם דֹּלְקִים וְלִב־רָע:	26.23	silver drosses overlaid-one upon sherd lips burning-ones &-heart evil-one
כִּי־יִחַן קוֹלוֹ אֶל־תְּאֵמֶן־בּוֹ	26.25	for he-makes-gracious his-voice not you-believe in-him
כִּי שִׁבַע הוֹעִיבוֹת בְּלִבּוֹ: שֶׁמֶן וְקִטְרוֹת יִשְׂמַח־לֵב וּמַחֲקָ רֵעֵהוּ מֵעֲצַת־נֶפֶשׁ:	27.9	for seven abominations in-his-heart oil &-incense he-makes-glad heart &-sweetness his-neighbour counsel-of soul
חֲכָם בְּנִי וְשִׂמַח לִבִּי	27.11	be-wise! my-son &-make-rejoice! my-heart
וְאֶשִׁיבָה חֲרָפִי דָבָר: כַּמִּים הַפָּנִים לַפָּנִים	27.19	&-I-will-return my-reproaching-ones word like-the-water the-face to-the-face
כֵּן לִב־הָאָדָם לְאָדָם: יָדַע תְּדַע פְּנֵי צֹאנֶךָ שֵׂית לִבְךָ לְעֹדְרִים:	27.23	thus heart-of the-man to-the-man knowing you-know face-of your-flock set! your-heart to-herds
אֲשֶׁר־י אָדָם מִפְּחַד תָּמִיד וּמִקְשָׁה לִבּוֹ יִפּוֹל בְּרָעָה:	28.14	happinesses-of man dreading-one always &-hardening-one his-heart he-falls in-evil
בּוֹטֵחַ בְּלִבּוֹ הוּא כְּסִיל וְהוֹלֵךְ בְּחָכְמָה הוּא יִמְלֹט:	28.26	trusting-one in-his-heart he fool &-walking-one in-wisdom he he-escapes

“Heart” in Proverbs 30-31

דֶּרֶךְ הַנְּשֹׂר בַּשָּׁמַיִם דֶּרֶךְ הַנָּחַשׁ עַל־צוּר דֶּרֶךְ־אֲנִיָּה בְּלִב־יָם וְדֶרֶךְ גִּבּוֹר בְּעֵלְמָה:	30.19	the way of a vulture in the sky, the way of a snake upon rock, the way of a ship in the heart of the sea, and the way of a man with a virgin.
בְּטַח בָּהּ לֵב בְּעֵלְהָ וְשָׁלַל לֹא יִחְסַר:	31.11	Her husband’s heart trusts her And he lacks not plunder.

C1. THE HEART OF THE WICKED IN PROVERBS		
לב חרש מחשבות און רגלים ממהרות לרוץ לרעה:	6.18	A heart that devises wicked plans Feet that hasten to run to evil
כסף נבחר לשון צדיק לב רשעים כמעט:	10.20	Choice silver is the tongue of the righteous The heart of the wicked is like (something) little
מרמה בלב-חרשי רע וליעצי שלום שמחה:	12.20	Deceit is in the heart of those who plough up evil But counselors of peace have joy
לב צדיק יהגה לענות ופי רשעים יביע רעות:	15.28	A just man's heart ponders in order to answer But the mouth of the wicked bubbles with evil things
רום-עינים ורחב-לב גר רשעים חטאת:	21.4	Haughty eyes and a wide heart The lamp of the wicked is sin
כסף סיגים מצפה על-חרש שפתים דלקים ולב-רע:	26.23	Silver dross overlaid on earthen vessel Burning lips and a wicked heart

According to these vv., the wicked can have a heart, albeit one that devises wickedness (6.18), is worthless (10.20), causes wickedness (12.20), answers thoughtlessly and carelessly (15.28), is proud and arrogant (21.4), and dissembles in order to hide its wicked nature and its evil intent (26.23). How can fools (who are also the “wicked”, according to Proverbs) both lack and have a heart?

Perhaps this means that Solomon is warning readers that *something* within us drives our actions and words, a center of volition called the “heart” (what we might call “mind”, “soul”, “(inner) person”, &c.).

D. "ACQUIRE" IN PROVERBS (all occurrences of <i>qnh</i> , קנה in Pr)			
		What can be "acquired"	
Wisdom	4.5	קנה חכמה קנה בינה אל-תשכח ואל-תט מאמרי-פי: ראשית חכמה קנה חכמה ובכל-קנינד קנה בינה: ראשית דרכו קדם מפעליו מאז: יהיה קנני קנה-חכמה מה-טוב מחרוץ וקנות בינה נבחר מקסף: למה-זה מחיר ביד-כסיל לקנות חכמה ולב-אין: 1.5 שמע חכם ויוסף לקח ונבון תחבלות יקנה: 18.15 לב נבון יקנה-דעת ואון חכמים תבקש-דעת: 23.23 אמת קנה ואל-תמכר חכמה ומוסר ובינה: 15.32 פורע מוסר מואס נפשו ושומע תוכחת קונה לב: 19.8 קנה-לב אהב נפשו שמר תבונה למצא-טוב: 20.14 רע רע יאמר הקונה ואזל לו אז יתהלל:	Get wisdom! Get insight! Forget not! And turn not from the words of my mouth! The beginning of wisdom is get wisdom! And in all your getting, get insight! Yhwh acquired me, the beginning of his way, before his works from then. Acquire wisdom! What is better than fine gold? And to acquire insight is better chosen than silver. Why is there a price in a fool's hand, To get wisdom, but without a heart? He hears wisdom And he adds learning And he acquires discernment of plans. A discerning heart acquires knowledge And the ear of the wise seeks knowledge Acquire truth! And do not sell wisdom and discipline and insight. Whoever neglects discipline despises his soul And whoever hears a rebuke acquires a heart Whoever acquires a heart loves his soul Whoever guards discernment by finding good Bad, bad! says the buyer And whoever goes then boasts to himself.
	Discernment		
	Knowledge		
	Truth		
	Heart		
	Merchandise		

## G1. ACQUIRING A HEART (Prosodic Analysis)

Ref.	MT (BHS)	Semantics	Morphosyntax	
15.32a	פורע מוסר מואס נפשו	a . b . c	4: 2.1.1 S[S+P/ptc - O] - P/ptc - O PN[S+P/ptc - O] - S[S+P/ptc - O]	ms QPtc
15.32b	ושומע תוכחת קונה לב:	a <sup>1</sup> . b <sup>1</sup> . c <sup>1</sup>	4: 2.1.1 S[S+P/ptc - O] - P/ptc - O	ms QPtc
19.8a	קנה-לב אהב נפשו	a . b . c	4: 2.1.1 S[S+P/ptc - O] - P/ptc - O PN[S+P/ptc - O] - S[S+P/ptc - O]	ms QPtc
19.8b	שמר תבונה למצא-טוב:	a <sup>1</sup> . d . e	4: 2.1.1 S[S+P/ptc - O] - P/NC - O	Q NC

E. "PURSUIT" IN PROVERBS (all occurrences of <i>rdf</i> /רדף in Pr)				
	Ref.	Contrast	Obj./Pursuit	Result
עבד אדמתו ישבע־לחם ומרדף ריקים חסר־לב:	12.11	serves the ground	empty things	starves
עבד אדמתו ישבע־לחם ומרדף ריקים ישבע־דיש:	28.19	serves the ground	empty things	poverty
חטאים תרדף רעה ואת־צדיקים ישלם־טוב:	13.21		evil	
תועבת יהוה דרך רשע ומרדף צדקה יאהב:	15.9		righteousness	loved of Yhwh
דרך צדקה וחסד ימצא חיים צדקה וכבוד:	21.21		righteousness	life, righteousnes, honour
כל אחי־רש שגאהו אף כי מרעהו רחקו ממנו מרדף אמרים לא־ {לֹא־} המה:	19.7		others(?) words(?)	aloneness/poverty
נסו ואין־רדף רשע וצדיקים ככפיר יבטח:	28.1		nothing	

These vv. suggest that nearly any aspect of life can be(come) an object of pursuit, whether wise (15.9; 21.21) or foolish (12.11; 28.19; 13.21). We can also engage in the fruitless pursuit of a good object (friendship, relationship; 19.7). It is difficult to read 28.1 without suspecting that it was said with a touch of humour—*nothing* pursues them, yet they flee; they flee, therefore, their own fears (another fruitless flight).

F. "END/EXTREMITY" (תוצאת) IN BIBLICAL HEBREW (all occurrences)		
וְנֹסֵב לְכֶם הַגְּבוּל מִנֶּגֶב לְמַעַלָּה עֲקָרְבַיִם וְעֵבֶר צִנְה וְהָיוּ תוֹצְאוֹתָיו מִנֶּגֶב לְקֹדֶשׁ בְּרֹנֶע וַיֵּצֵא חֲצַר־אֲדָר וְעֵבֶר עֲצֻמָּנָה:	Nu 34.4	southern extremity of Israel's southern border: Beersheba
וְנֹסֵב הַגְּבוּל מִעֲצֻמוֹן נַחֲלָה מִצְרַיִם וְהָיוּ תוֹצְאוֹתָיו הַיָּמָה:	Nu 34.5	western border of Israel: the sea
מִהָר הַהָר תְּחָאוּ לְבָא חֲמַת וְהָיוּ תוֹצְאוֹת הַגְּבוּל צְדָדָה:	Nu 34:8	northern extremity of Israel's northern border: Zedad
וַיֵּצֵא הַגְּבוּל וּזְרָנָה וְהָיוּ תוֹצְאוֹתָיו חֲצַר עֵינָן זֶה־יְהִיָּה לְכֶם גְּבוּל צְפוֹן:	Nu 34.9	end of Israel's northern border: Hazar-enan
וַיֵּרֶד הַגְּבוּל הַיַּרְדֵּנָה וְהָיוּ תוֹצְאוֹתָיו יָם הַמֶּלַח זֹאת תְּהִיָּה לְכֶם הָאָרֶץ לְגַבְלֹתֶיהָ סָבִיב:	Nu 34:12	southern end of Israel's eastern border: Salt Sea
וְעֵבֶר עֲצֻמוֹנָה וַיֵּצֵא נַחַל מִצְרַיִם וְהָיוּ תוֹצְאוֹת הַגְּבוּל לְכֶם גְּבוּל נֶגֶב:	Js 15:4	western extremity of Judah's southern border: the sea
וְעֵלָה הַגְּבוּל דְּבָרָה מֵעֵמֶק עֶכוֹר וְצִפּוֹנָה פְּנֵה אֶל־הַגְּלִיל אֲשֶׁר־נִכַח לְמַעַלָּה אֲדָמִים אֲשֶׁר מִנֶּגֶב לְנַחַל וְעֵבֶר הַגְּבוּל אֶל־מִי־עֵין שִׁמְשׁ וְהָיוּ תוֹצְאוֹתָיו אֶל־עֵין רֹגֵל:	Js 15.7	one extremity of Judah's northern border: En-rogel
וַיֵּצֵא הַגְּבוּל אֶל־כַּחֲף עֲקָרוֹן צְפוֹנָה וְחָאֵר הַגְּבוּל שְׁפָרוֹנָה וְעֵבֶר הַר־הַבְּעֵלָה וַיֵּצֵא יְבוּאֵל וְהָיוּ תוֹצְאוֹת הַגְּבוּל יָמָה:	Js 15.11	western extremity of Judah's northern border: the sea
וַיֵּרֶד יָמָה אֶל־גְּבוּל הַיַּפְלָטִי עַד גְּבוּל בֵּית־חֹרוֹן תַּחְתּוֹן וְעַד־גְּוֹר וְהָיוּ תוֹצְאוֹתָיו {תוֹצְאוֹתָיו} יָמָה:	Js 16.3	western extremity of territory of "Joseph": the sea
מִתְּפוּחַ יַלְדֵי הַגְּבוּל יָמָה נַחַל קָנָה וְהָיוּ תוֹצְאוֹתָיו הַיָּמָה זֹאת נַחֲלַת מִטָּה בְּנֵי־אֶפְרַיִם לְמִשְׁפַּחְתָּם:	Js 16.8	western extremity of territory of Ephraim: the sea
וַיֵּרֶד הַגְּבוּל נַחַל קָנָה נֶגְבָּה לְנַחַל עָרִים הָאֵלֶּה לְאֶפְרַיִם בְּחוּף עָרֵי מְנַשֶּׁה וְגְבוּל מְנַשֶּׁה מִצְפוֹן לְנַחַל וַיְהִי תוֹצְאוֹתָיו הַיָּמָה:	Js 17.9	western extremity of territory of Manasseh: the sea
כִּי הָרַיִת הָיָה־לָךְ כִּי־יַעַר הוּא וּבְרֵאשִׁיתוֹ וְהָיָה לְךָ תוֹצְאוֹתָיו כִּי־חֹרֵישׁ אֶת־הַכְּנַעֲנִי כִּי רֹכֵב בְּרִזְלָלוֹ כִּי חֶזֶק הוּא:	Js 17.18	extent of the "highlands" (har) allotted to Ephraim-Manasseh
וַיְהִי לָהֶם הַגְּבוּל לְפֶאת צְפוֹנָה מִן־הַיַּרְדֵּן וְעֵלָה הַגְּבוּל אֶל־כַּחֲף יְרִיחוֹ מִצְפוֹן וְעֵלָה בְּהָר יָמָה וְהָיוּ תוֹצְאוֹתָיו מִדְּבָרָה בֵּית אֲוֹן:	Js 18.12	extremity of territory of Benjamin: Beth-aven
וְחָאֵר הַגְּבוּל וְנֹסֵב לְפֶאתָיִם נֶגְבָּה מִן־הָהָר אֲשֶׁר עַל־פְּנֵי בֵּית־חֹרוֹן נֶגְבָּה וְהָיוּ תוֹצְאוֹתָיו אֶל־קִרְיַת־בַּעַל הַיָּא קִרְיַת יַעֲרִים עִיר בְּנֵי יְהוּדָה זֹאת פֶּאתָיִם:	Js 18.14	western "corner" (p'at) of Benjamin's border: Kiriat-baal/jearim
וְעֵבֶר הַגְּבוּל אֶל־כַּחֲף בֵּית־חַגְלָה צְפוֹנָה וְהָיוּ תוֹצְאוֹתָיו {תוֹצְאוֹת} הַגְּבוּל אֶל־לְשׁוֹן יָם־הַמֶּלַח צְפוֹנָה אֶל־קֶצֶה הַיַּרְדֵּן נֶגְבָּה זֶה גְבוּל נֶגֶב:	Js 18.19	eastern end of Benjamin's southern border: north bay of Salt Sea / south end of Jordan
וְנֹסֵב אַחֲרָיו הַגְּבוּל מִצְפוֹן תַּחְתּוֹן וְהָיוּ תוֹצְאוֹתָיו גִּי יַפְתַּח־אֵל:	Js 19.14	end of Zebulun's ["circular"] border: Iphtahel
וּפְגַע הַגְּבוּל בְּחֹבוֹר וְשִׁחְצוּמָה {ו} {שִׁחְצוּמָה} וּבֵית שִׁמְשׁ וְהָיוּ תוֹצְאוֹת גְּבוּלֵם הַיַּרְדֵּן עָרִים שִׁשׁ־עֶשְׂרֵה וְחֲצָרֵיהֶן:	Js 19.22	end of Issachar's ["circular"] border: the Jordan
וְשֵׁב הַגְּבוּל הָרְמָה וְעַד־עִיר מִבְּצָר־צֹר וְשֵׁב הַגְּבוּל חֹסֶה וְהָיוּ תוֹצְאוֹתָיו הַיָּמָה מִחֻבֵּל אֶכְזִיבָה:	Js 19.29	end of Asher's ["circular"] border: the sea
וַיְהִי גְבוּלֵם מִחֻלָּף מֵאֵלּוֹן בְּצַעֲנָנִים וְאֲדָמִי הַנֶּקֶב וַיְבוּאֵל עַד־לְקוּם וַיְהִי תוֹצְאוֹתָיו הַיַּרְדֵּן:	Js 19.33	eastern end of Naphtali's ["circular"] border: Jordan
וַיֵּשְׁבוּ בְּגִלְעָד בְּבֶשֶׁן וּבְבִנְחִיָּה וּבְכָל־מְגֵרָשֵׁי שְׂרוֹן עַל־תוֹצְאוֹתָם:	1 Chr 5.16	border of "Sons of Gad"
הָאֵל לָנוּ אֵל לְמוֹשְׁעוֹת וְלִיְהוָה אֲדָנִי לְמוֹת תוֹצְאוֹת:	Ps 68.21	borders(?) of death
מְכַל־מִשְׁמֵר נִצַּר לְבָבְךָ כִּי־מִמֶּנּוּ תוֹצְאוֹת חַיִּים:	Pr 4.23	borders(?) of life
וְאֵלֶּה תוֹצְאוֹת הָעִיר מִפֶּאת צְפוֹן חֲמֵשׁ מֵאוֹת וְאַרְבַּעַת אֲלָפִים מְדָה:	Ezk 48.30	boundaries of the city

1. In all of its prose occurrences (Nu, Js, 1 Chr, Ezk), *to'ts'ô't*<sup>25</sup> refers to boundaries or borders, usually to the final point of that border, i.e., where it meets itself (where it started) or where it meets a geographical feature (e.g., the Jordan or the sea).
2. In its two poetic occurrences it can also refer to the idea of the end or limit of something, either death (Ps 68.21) or life (Pr 4.23).
3. In Pr 4.23, the grammatical structure of the phrase “the heart’s extremity/end” exactly parallels that of “the border’s extremity/end” in five passages (Nu 34.8; Js 15.4, 11; 18.19; 19.22).<sup>26</sup> This suggests that its metaphoric use expects the reader of Pr 4.23 to assume its [usual] geopolitical reference (as also in Ps 68.21).
4. Its geopolitical use suggests that in Pr 4.23, *to'ts'ô't* refers primarily to the outcome of one’s life will—where we will “end up”—rather than to its manner. Although these ideas are closely related, they are not identical: our choice of route determines our destination, whereas our destination guides—but does not determine—the route that we travel to reach it—there is rarely only one route to a given location.

There are, however, three complications, which I have yet to understand.

5. If we conclude that *to'ts'ô't* means “end” or “outcome”, we need also to ponder its semantic relationship to the noun *'ach'rit*, which occurs thirteen times in Pr<sup>27</sup>. It often rendered “end”, but seems rather to refer primarily to the “outcome” or “result” of a particular choice or way of behaviour (Pr 5.4, 11; 14.12, 13; 16.25; 19.20; 20.21; 23.18, 32; 24.14, 20; 25.8; 29.21). We might therefore wonder why he uses *to'ts'ô't* in Pr 4.23 (with its strongly geopolitical imagery), if it refers to the “end” or “final outcome” or “destination” of a matter.  
 And we might, of course, conclude that Solomon simply adapted an existing poem for the “introduction” to his book of instruction, a poem that he was unwilling to change, perhaps because it was so well-known that to change it would have rendered it unacceptable, or perhaps because he simply “liked the way it sounded”.<sup>28</sup>
6. Part of the ambiguity in these “boundary lists” is due to the double referent of the word *g'vûl*, which can refer to either a boundary or to the territory which it encloses. This word occurs three times in Pr, referring to the “boundary/territory” of a widow (15.25) and to the “boundaries/territories of old” (22.28; 23.10). It is not used metaphorically in Biblical Hebrew,
7. The word *pe'a* (פֶּאֶה) seems to refer to either the “corner”, “edge”, or “side” of a thing. It refers to the corners or sides/edges of furniture of the Tabernacle (Ex 25.26), as well as to the Tabernacle’s framework (Ex 26.18, 20) and the framework of its courtyard (Ex 27.9, 11-13), &c., but also occurs in territorial boundary lists, referring to “borders” or to specific locations where the borders of tribal allotments “turn/reach a corner” (Num 34.3; 35.5; Js 15.5; 18.12, 14, 15, 20), to tribal boundaries described in Ezekiel (47.15, 17-20; 48.1-8, 23-28), and to the borders of the city and temple (Ezk 48.30, 32-34). It is not used metaphorically in Biblical Hebrew.

<sup>25</sup>The word occurs only in the plural in Biblical Hebrew.

<sup>26</sup>Of these five instances, three are followed by a toponym with the *he locativum* (so-called): “to/at Zedad” (Nu 34.8), “to/at the sea” (Js 15.4, 11). One is followed by a prepositional phrase, which has much the same function: “to the tongue of the Sea of Salt on the north” (Js 18.19). In the fifth, *g'vûl* has a pronominal suffix (“their [Issachar] boundary”) followed by “the Jordan” (no “locative”).

<sup>27</sup>Its use in Pr represents nearly one-fourth of its total of sixty occurrences in Biblical Hebrew, which makes this yet another proverbial “outlier” in terms of both use and frequency.

<sup>28</sup>And at this point, conjecture—already cantilevered over a chasm of ignorance—ends.

G. "Simple, <i>naif</i> " (פְּתִי) IN BIBLICAL HEBREW (all occurrences)		
תּוֹרַת יְהוָה הַמִּימָה מְשִׁיבַת נַפְשׁ עֲדוֹת יְהוָה נֹאמְנָה מַחְכִּימַת פְּתִי: שֹׁמֵר פְּתָאִים יְהוָה דְּלוּתִי וְלִי יְהוֹשִׁיעַ:	Ps 19.8	YHWH's teaching is perfect, restoring the soul YHWH's testimony is true, making the wise
פֶּתַח דְּבָרֶיךָ יֵאִיר מִבֵּין פְּתִיִּים:	Ps 119.130	Opening of your words gives light, That which helps [makes!] the <i>naif</i> understand
לְחַת לַפְתָּאִים עֲרָמָה לְנֶעַר דַּעַת וּמִזְמָה:	Pr 1.4	by giving prudence to the <i>naif</i> to the young man knowledge and discretion(?)
כִּי מִשׁוּבַת פְּתִיִּים תִּהְרָגוּם וְשִׁלּוֹת כְּסִילִים חֲאָבְדָם:	Pr 1.32	for the turning back of the <i>naif</i> kills them and the <i>acedia</i> of fools destroys them
וְאֵרָא בַּפְתָּאִים אֲבִינָה בְּבָנִים נֶעַר חֲסֵר-לֵב:	Pr 7.7	and I saw among the the <i>naif</i> I discerned among the sons a young man lacking a heart
הִבִּינוּ פְתָאִים עֲרָמָה וְכִסְיִלִים הִבִּינוּ לֵב:	Pr 8.5	Understand prudence, <i>naif</i> ones! And, fools, understand [a] heart!
מִי פְתִי יִסֵּר הִנֵּה חֲסֵר-לֵב אָמְרָה לוֹ:	Pr 9.4	Who is <i>naif</i> ? He should turn aside here. To one who lacks a heart she said, ...
עֲזְבוּ פְתָאִים וַחַיּוּ וְאֲשֶׁרוּ בְּדֶרֶךְ בִּינָה:	Pr 9.6	Abandon, <i>naif</i> ones, and live and be happy in the way of understanding
מִי פְתִי יִסֵּר הִנֵּה חֲסֵר-לֵב אָמְרָה לוֹ:	Pr 9.16	Who is <i>naif</i> ? He should turn aside here. To one who lacks a heart she said, ...
פְתִי יֵאֱמִין לְכָל-דָּבָר וְעָרוֹם יִבִּין לְאֲשֶׁרוֹ:	Pr 14.15	A <i>naif</i> believes every word And the prudent understands his steps
נִחְלוּ פְתָאִים אִוְלָח וְעָרוֹמִים יִכְתְּרוּ דַעַת:	Pr 14.18	The <i>naif</i> inherit folly And the prudent surround knowledge
לֵץ תִּפְּחָה וּפְתִי יַעֲרֹם וְהוֹכִיחַ לְנֹבֵן יִבִּין דַּעַת:	Pr 19.25	Strike a scoffer And a <i>naif</i> gains prudence And rebuke the discerning— He discerns knowledge
בְּעִנְשׁ-לֵץ יִחְכַּם פְתִי וּבְהַשְׁכִּיל לְחָכָם יִקַּח דַּעַת:	Pr 21.11	When a scoffer is punished, the <i>naif</i> become wise And when a wise man is instructed he gets knowledge
עָרוֹם רָאָה רָעָה וַיִּסְתֵּר {ו} {וְנִסְתָּר} וּפְתִיִּים עָבְרוּ וְנִעְנְשׂוּ:	Pr 22.3	A prudent one sees evil/trouble/disaster And he hides And the <i>naif</i> pass by And are punished.
עָרוֹם רָאָה רָעָה נִסְתָּר פְתָאִים עָבְרוּ וְנִעְנְשׂוּ:	Pr 27.12	A prudent one sees evil/trouble/disaster He hides The <i>naif</i> pass by And are punished.
וְכֵן תַּעֲשֶׂה בַשְּׁבַעָה בַחֹדֶשׁ מֵאִישׁ שָׁגָה וּמִפְתִּי וּכְפַרְתָּם אֶת-הַבַּיִת:	Ezk 45.20	And thus you shall do in the seventh month from the man who errs and from the <i>naif</i> and you shall atone [for] the house/Temple.

1. The word *peti*, "simple", "*naif*", occurs seventeen times in Biblical Hebrew, thirteen times in Pr (Pr 1.4; 1.32; 7.7; 8.5; 9.4, 6, 16; 14.15, 18; 19.25; 21.11; 22.3; 27.12), three times in the Psalter (Ps 19.8; 116.6; 119.130), and once in Ezk (Ezk 45.20).

2. Of its thirteen proverbial occurrences, five are *cautionary* or *negative*. Three of these texts warn that the *naïf* destroy themselves by their ignorance and lack of forethought (1.32; 22.3 [|| 27.12]), one that their lack of discernment leads them into trouble (14.15), one that warns that folly is what the *naïf* inherit by virtue of their birth (14.18).

Four of these passages set the *naïf* in contrast to the “prudent” (14.15, 18; 22.3; 27.12); the fifth compares them to fools (1.32).

<b>Negative</b>	
Pr 1.32	for the turning back of the <i>naïf</i> kills them and the <i>acedia</i> (?) [waywardness] of fools destroys them
Pr 14.15	A <i>naïf</i> believes every word And the prudent understands his steps
Pr 14.18	The <i>naïf</i> inherit folly And the prudent surround knowledge
Pr 22.3	A prudent one sees evil/trouble/disaster And he hides And the <i>naïf</i> pass by And are punished.
Pr 27.12	A prudent one sees evil/trouble/disaster He hides The <i>naïf</i> pass by And are punished.

3. Another five passages might be considered *positive*, or at least *hopeful*, in that they appear to offer some hope that the *naïf* will or can become less naïve, and perhaps even prudent. For example, one of the outcomes of studying the book of Proverbs is that the *naïf* gain prudence (1.4); they also gain prudence or become wise when they see punishment meted out to scoffers (19.25a-b; 21.11a) or the wise corrected (19.25c-d; 21.11b), which suggests some correlation between being naïve and being prone to cynicism or mockery and a contrast between discernment, prudence, and wisdom (on the one hand) and *naïveté* (on the other). And twice Wisdom herself calls on the *naïf* to act—either to abandon their *naïveté* (9.6), or to their “discernment” (“perspicacity, understanding, insight”), in apparent defiance of their *naïveté* (8.5).

<b>Positive</b>	
Pr 1.4	by giving prudence to the <i>naïf</i> to the young man knowledge and discretion(?)
Pr 19.25	Strike a scoffer And a <i>naïf</i> gains prudence And rebuke the discerning— He discerns knowledge
Pr 21.11	When a scoffer is punished, the <i>naïf</i> become wise And when a wise man is instructed he gets knowledge
Pr 8.5	Understand prudence, <i>naïf</i> ones! And, fools, understand [a] heart!
Pr 9.6	Abandon [ <i>naïveté</i> ], <i>naïf</i> ones, and live and be happy in the way of understanding

4. Finally, three verses present *naïveté* as either *neutral* or *undecided*, since it is only the larger context that reveals their fate. If the *naïf* respond to Wisdom’s invitation, they find wisdom and life, abandon their *naïveté*, and live

(9.4-6); if they choose to respond to the invitation of Folly—whether this is folly personified (9.13-17) or a particular (type of) foolish woman (7.1-27), they will end up in death (7.7; 9.18).

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**“Neutral/Undecided”**

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Pr 9.4 = 9.16 Who is *naïf*?

He should turn aside here.

To one who lacks a heart she said, ...

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Pr 7.7 and I saw among the the *naïf*

I discerned among the sons a young man lacking a heart

## H. "END/OUTCOME" (אַחֲרִית) IN PROVERBS

וְאַחֲרִיתָהּ מָרָה כְּלַעֲנָה תְּהֵאֵרַב כְּחֶרֶב פִּיּוֹת:	5.4	and her end/outcome is bitter as wormwood, sharp as a two-edged sword
וְנִהְיָה בְּאַחֲרִיתָהּ כְּשֵׁרֶף וּשְׂאֵרֶף:	5.11	
יֵשׁ דֶּרֶךְ יֵשׁר לְפָנֵי־אִישׁ וְאַחֲרִיתָהּ דֶּרֶכ־מָוֹת:	14.12	
גַּם־בְּשֹׁחֵק יִכָּאֵב־לֵב וְאַחֲרִיתָהּ שִׂמְחָה תּוֹגָה:	14.13	
יֵשׁ דֶּרֶךְ יֵשׁר לְפָנֵי־אִישׁ וְאַחֲרִיתָהּ דֶּרֶכ־מָוֹת:	16.25	
שָׁמַע עֲצָה וְקָבַל מוֹסֵר לְמַעַן תִּחַכֵּם בְּאַחֲרִיתָהּ:	19.20	
נִחְלָה מִבְּחֵלֶת {מִבְּהֵלֶת} בְּרֵאשִׁיטָה וְאַחֲרִיתָהּ לֹא תִבְרָךְ:	20.21	
כִּי אִם־יֵשׁ אַחֲרִית וְתִקְוָתָךְ לֹא תִכְרַת:	23.18	
אַחֲרֵיכֶם כְּנָחַשׁ יִשָּׁךְ וְכִצְפֹּעֵנִי יִפְרֹשׁ:	23.32	
חִכְמָה לְנִפְשָׁךְ אִם־מִצְאָתָהּ וְיֵשׁ אַחֲרִית וְתִקְוָתָךְ לֹא תִכְרַת: כִּן דָּעָה	24.14	
כִּי לֹא־תִהְיֶה אַחֲרִית לְרַע גֵּר רָשָׁעִים יִדְעֶךָ:	24.20	
לְרַב מִהָר פֶּן מֵה־תַּעֲשֶׂה בְּאַחֲרִיתָהּ בְּהִכְלִים אֶתְךָ רַעְךָ: אֶל־חֲצֵא	25.8	
מִפְּנֵי מִנְעֵר עֲבָדוֹ וְאַחֲרֵיכֶם יִהְיֶה מְנוּן:	29.21	

to be continued ...

### Further Notes

In English, “heartless” means cruel, lacking in pity (i.e., lacking a heart that feels for others); “heartless” is therefore not a helpful gloss for *chasar-leb*. We could, however, render *chasar-leb* literally as “lacking a heart”, which would both maintain the image and increase its dramatic effect (even though, like many metaphors that are specific to a culture, it might require some further explanation).

In English, “lack heart” can be a synonym for “heartless”, but it can also mean to have no desire—or even to be unwilling—to do something: “She didn’t have the heart to tell her sister that the cookies had been burned.” It can also mean to be without hope: “The heart had gone out of them” (cf. “discourage” / “dishearten” vs. “encourage”).

This is not the same as “Her heart went out to them”, which signals pity or compassion or (at the very least) deep sympathy.