

Dear Brothers and Sisters
Bible Class today Pro 18:24

A man *that hath* friends must shew himself friendly: and there is a friend *that* sticketh closer than a brother.

There is also Pro 17:17 A friend loveth at all times, and a brother is born for adversity. But

רָעָה'אֵל

raw-ah'is described as follows

A primitive root; properly to spoil (literally by breaking to pieces); figuratively to make (or be) good for nothing, that is, bad (physically, socially or morally). (associate selves and show self friendly are by mistake for H7462.): - afflict, associate selves [by mistake for H7462], break (down, in pieces), + displease, (be, bring, do) evil (doer, entreat, man), show self friendly [by mistake for H7462], do harm, (do) hurt, (behave self, deal) ill, x indeed, do mischief, punish, still vex, (do) wicked (doer, -ly), be (deal, do) worse.

Total KJV occurrences: 98

It is thus suggested that it is the opposite of how it is interpreted here as we can see in the above uses. But it does not make sense if that description is used but we know that in English some words can have two ways of viewing them, e.g. awful can mean bad but is also used as an expression of how great/good something is awfully big. Such expressions are common in modern slang

An incidental

So looking at the interpretation in line with Prov. 17v17 and other Scriptures:-there is the example of David and Jonathan. Saul very early on became jealous of David because of his success in war but more particularly the reaction of the people. Saul would have slain him but God was with David to ensure that he would never be slain; see also 1Sam 13v14, 1Sam 18v1 and 20v17.

Also Pro 27:9 Ointment and perfume rejoice the heart: so *doth* the sweetness of a man's friend by hearty counsel.(from the heart-meant for the good of the friend)

There is also 2Sam 1v26 where at Jonathan's death the love between David and Jonathan is expressed as greater than that between women. Their love is also described in 1Sam 19/2; 20/41 and 23/15

Job in his perplexity in the visit by three who failed to understand but who thought themselves friends also describes what he would do as a friend to anyone afflicted as he was

Job 16:1 Then Job answered and said,
Job 16:2 I have heard many such things: miserable comforters *are* ye all.
Job 16:3 Shall vain words have an end? or what emboldeneth thee that thou answerest?
Job 16:4 I also could speak as ye *do*: if your soul were in my soul's stead, I could heap up words against you, and shake mine head at you.
Job 16:5 *But* I would strengthen you with my mouth, and the moving of my lips should assuage *your grief*. -It is to place oneself in the position of the sufferer to gain full understanding

From this we see what our reaction should be to any brother or sister afflicted whether near or far in distance-it is to empathise with him or her,-to try to enter into what it means to them, but never thinking that it is judgment from God. Trials and difficulties are for shaping of our characters to help us be as Jesus

Looking at the New Testament and love in the Fellowship, we have this from Jesus Himself God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whoso believed on Him should not perish but have eternal life

Joh 15:12 This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you.
Joh 15:13 Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.
Joh 15:14 Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you.
Joh 15:15 Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you.

It is clear that this is also the will of God. It is not just a matter of expressing sympathy but trying to fully understand the trial they are going through Jesus describes Himself here as a friend of all those who keep the commandments of God and this must be the basis of our friendship but it does not need to exclude natural affinity where the love of God prevails, as with David and Jonathan. But what about our former friends-those we had before we were baptised? I found as soon as I mentioned my faith

they withdrew their friendship -It was seen in a different light. But it may not always happen in that way in which case our conduct and faith might convince them and this is a reflection of God Himself of God we are told

Joh 3:16 For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

Joh 3:17 For God sent not his son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.

Also **Joh 13:23** Now there was leaning on Jesus' bosom one of his disciples, whom Jesus loved. We must be careful how we read this for Jesus loved all His disciples but it is mentioned several times. There is also mention of Lazarus in John 11

So we see in being human we may have more natural affection toward some than others but as we are shown what matters;-**1Pe 3:8** Finally, *be ye* all of one mind, having compassion one of another, love as brethren, *be* pitiful, *be* courteous. It is vital that we get this balance correct

Referring again to Lazarus he was also spoken of in this way and it is a very interesting account to meditate upon in John 11 for though Jesus knew that Lazarus would be raised to judgement and that He had the power to raise him to mortal life again, he must nevertheless act as v4 and not hurry knowing the power of the Almighty was available to Him. So He did not hasten (act by His personal feelings) but to show that all was in God's hands. (this is indeed the situation of all who are called in every circumstance-not just to sit back for we must do what we can to help ourselves and then sit back and pray)

A man *that hath* friends must shew himself friendly

Brother Ken