

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

(#77) The Proverbs of Solomon 14:4- Clean Trough, No Food!

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

Proverbs 14:4:

Where no oxen are, the trough is clean; but much increase comes by the strength of an ox.

Oxen represent the best farming beast before mechanization, for they were strong, dependable, ate less than a horse but gave fertilizing manure, and were even useful for food (try eating a tractor!). Oxen are a great investment in many societies today.

The strength of every society is its farmers and farmland. God-given wisdom helped Solomon to say: "Moreover the profit of the land is for all; even the king is served from the field" (**Ecclesiastes 5:9**). It used to be said that "an army moves on its stomach," but all empires and countries do, also! Agriculture should be foremost in consideration in any economy. City-folk may ridicule country bumpkins, but country people will survive economic downturns much better! All the "giant" grocery stores have nothing if it doesn't come from the ground! Pre-cooked everything is nothing without farming! While greedy politicians are taxing businesses into the ground, workers of the ground feed the factory workers and supply the stores! Whatever must be done to depend upon local farming and eliminate imports should be done!

"Where no oxen are, the trough is clean" shows a logical conclusion. Without oxen, there is no hay to feed them, without hay, there is no manure with which to fertilize, hence without oxen there is no food produced! Oxen have always been efficient farm equipment.

To show them from where their blessings had come, and their need to repent, God cursed the northern kingdom of Israel with "'cleanness of teeth in all your cities. And lack of bread in all your places; Yet you have not returned to Me,' Says the LORD" (**Amos 4:6**). You don't have to brush your teeth if there are no food

All Scriptures and comments are based on the New King James Version, unless otherwise noted.



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particles on them! Without a family, a man can't complain about supporting them! Without children, a woman can't complain about cooking their meals and cleaning their clothes! The cleanest houses are without family life in them!

The LORD God planted a garden eastward in Eden, and there He put the man whom He had formed. And out of the ground the LORD God made every tree grow that is pleasant to the sight and good for food. The tree of life was also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.
([Genesis 2:8-9](#))

But even in the Garden of Eden where God had provided everything "good" ([Genesis 1:31](#)), "the LORD God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to tend and keep it" ([Genesis 2:15](#)). God-given agriculture is the "oldest profession" on Earth, not sin-driven prostitution, as the ungodly so frequently repeat!

Since God made the land, the seeds, and the farmers, let us thank God for providing natural food that keeps us alive!

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