

Prov 22:4 Humility and the fear of the LORD bring wealth and honor and life.

ENTRANCE TO HONOR - HUMILITY

SOLOMON INTERWEAVES IN THIS CHAPTER, HIS RELATIONSHIP WITH DAVID, HIS FATHER. THE READER CAN PICK OUT THE CLOSENESS SOLOMON HAD WITH HIS FATHER; Prov 4:3 For I was my father's son, tender and only beloved in the sight of my mother. THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE FATHER AND HIS SON IS SO IMPORTANT. THE FATHER IS TO LOVE HIS SON AND PROVIDE COMPANIONSHIP. THE SON, IN TURN, RETURNS HIS DAD'S LOVE WITH AN ATTITUDE OF HUMILITY AND ACTS OF HONOR. IN THIS LESSON WE LEARN THAT IN ORDER TO HAVE (AND GIVE) HONOR, WE MUST HAVE AN ATTITUDE OF HUMILITY. HUMILITY GIVES US ENTRANCE INTO HONOR.

AVOID ARGUING WITH PARENTS

Prov 20:3 It is to a man's honor to avoid strife, but every fool is quick to quarrel.

ACTUALLY, THIS IS A GENERAL COMMAND TO AVOID A PREDISPOSITION FOR BEING ARGUMENTATIVE - NOTHING CRUSHES THE SPIRITS OF PARENTS OR PROVOKES THEM MORE THAN WHEN THEIR CHILD (ESPECIALLY A TEENAGER) QUESTIONS OR DEBATES THEIR JUDGMENT.

THIS HAS TO BE TODAY'S MOST DISRUPTIVE PROBLEM IN THE HOME. THE TRAGEDY IS THAT A CHILD WHO INDULGES IN THIS PRACTICE DEVELOPS THIS INTO A CONSTANT JUDGMENTAL ATTITUDE TOWARD HIS PARENTS. THIS ENDANGERS HIS WHOLE FUTURE WHEN IT COMES TO GOD BLESSING HIS LIFE (*DEUT 5:16*).

THE HIGH GATE CALLED "ARGUMENT"

Prov 17:19 He who loves a quarrel loves sin; he who builds a high gate invites destruction.

THERE IS NO WAY AROUND IT. A CHILD ARGUING WITH HIS PARENTS IS SINNING. BUT IT'S AN ESPECIALLY TRAGIC SIN FOR IT IS DESTRUCTIVE BOTH IN THEIR RELATIONSHIP AND IN THE CHILD'S DEVELOPMENT TOWARD A GRACIOUS, MATURE ATTITUDE TOWARD THOSE AROUND HIM. THEN THERE IS THE PROBLEM OF A BELIEVING CHILD BEING OUT-OF-FELLOWSHIP WITH HIS HEAVENLY FATHER.

THIS TEXT DRAWS THE WORD PICTURE OF A HIGH GATE THAT BARS ENTRANCE. THIS GATE COMES BETWEEN A CLOSE, ENDEARING RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE CHILD AND HIS PARENTS. AS LONG AS THE CHILD ASSUMES THIS ATTITUDE HE SEVERS A VERY SPECIAL BOND BETWEEN HIMSELF AND THE ONLY PEOPLE WHO WOULD STICK BY HIM FOR LIFE - HIS PARENTS.

THE HIGH GATE "ARGUMENT" CAN LEAD TO TRAGIC CONSEQUENCES IF THE CHILD IS ALLOWED TO BUILD IT BETWEEN HIMSELF AND HIS PARENTS.

HUMILITY PRECEDES HONOR - 15:33; 18:12; 29:23

Prov 15:33 The fear of the LORD teaches a man wisdom, and humility comes before honor.

Prov 29:23 A man's pride brings him low, but a man of lowly spirit gains honor.

THE SINGLE MOST IMPORTANT LESSON A CHILD CAN LEARN IN LIFE IS THAT BEFORE PROMOTION, RESPONSIBILITY, A FULFILLING PLACE IN LIFE HE MUST MATURE, HE MUST LEARN WISDOM. THIS COMES FROM TWO AREAS IN HIS LIFE; FIRST, HE MUST HONOR HIS PARENTS. AT THE SAME TIME A RELATIONSHIP WITH HIS LORD IS VERY IMPORTANT. WHILE IT IS TRUE THAT MANY HAVE "MADE IT" IN LIFE OUTSIDE OF A SAVING EXPERIENCE - SUCH IS NOT THE "NORM" IN THE PLAN OF GOD.

HUMILITY IS THAT ATTITUDE IN THE CHILD WHERE HE SUBMITS HIS WILL AND THINKING TO BOTH HIS PARENTS AND HIS LORD. JESUS IS THE BEST EXAMPLE OF HUMILITY. LUKE, THE PHYSICIAN, RECORDS THAT THE LORD JESUS AS A CHILD "...went down to Nazareth with them and was obedient to them..." EVEN THOUGH HE WAS AWARE THAT HE WAS THE SON OF GOD, AND COULD HAVE, AT THIS TIME, BECOME QUITE A SENSATION AT JERUSALEM, IN HUMILITY, HE SUBMITTED TO HIS PARENTS AND RETURNED HOME. IT IS NOT A COINCIDENCE THAT LUKE RECORDED IN THE NEXT VERSE THAT "...Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men." HUMILITY IS NOT COMPLETE WITHOUT A PROPER, SUBMISSIVE RELATIONSHIP WITH BOTH THE CHILD'S LORD AND HIS PARENTS. AS EXEMPLIFIED BY JESUS' LIFE.

SO, WE SEE THAT BEFORE HONOR COMES HUMILITY - A CHILD THAT REBELS AGAINST

THIS PRINCIPLE WILL BE BROUGHT LOW.

GOD BLESSES HUMILITY - 3:34; 22:4

Prov 3:34 He mocks proud mockers but gives grace to the humble.

Prov 22:4 Humility and the fear of the LORD bring wealth and honor and life.

GOD DOES INDEED, BLESS HUMILITY. TONIGHT'S LESSON, PROPERLY LEARNED BY BOTH CHILDREN AND PARENTS ALIKE CAN BRING GRACE INTO THE HOUSEHOLD. ONE VERY IMPORTANT TEACHING IS THAT IF THE PARENTS AND CHILDREN ARE *BOTH* ASSUMING AN ATTITUDE OF HUMILITY TOWARD THEIR LORD AND EACH OTHER, GOD'S PROMISE IS THAT THAT HOUSEHOLD WILL BE GIVEN GRACE. GRACE¹ HERE IS SALVATION ALONG WITH *THE LORD'S MORAL CHARACTER OF GRACIOUSNESS*. IT IS PLEASANT TO LIVE IN A HOUSEHOLD THAT REFLECTS THE GRACIOUSNESS THAT COMES FROM THE LORD.

LOOK AT OUR SECOND TEXT; THERE IS A DIRECT RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN OUR SPIRITUAL LIFE AND OUR LIFE IN THE MUNDANE, ESPECIALLY THE FAMILY LIFE. FOR A HOME TO PROSPER UNDER THE UMBRELLA OF GOD'S GRACIOUSNESS, HUMILITY AND THE FEAR OF THE LORD MUST BE THE PREVAILING ATTITUDE. A PARENT OR CHILD WHO PROFESSES SPIRITUALITY AND YET DOES NOT HAVE A HUMBLE ATTITUDE AND SHOW GRACIOUSNESS IS LIVING A LIE.

A WARNING TO THE UNTHINKING CHILD OR PARENT - THE PROPER ROLE OF THE FATHER, MOTHER AND CHILD *MUST* BE HONORED IN THE CONTEXT OF HUMILITY. A CHILD CANNOT ACCUSE THE FATHER OF NOT BEING HUMBLE IF HE IS EXERCISING HIS RESPONSIBILITY OF FATHERLY DISCIPLINE. NOR CAN THE FATHER EXASPERATE HIS CHILD BY ASSUMING A BRUTISH, CRUEL BEHAVIOR.

ON THE OTHER HAND, THE HOUSEHOLD WHEREIN DWELLS PRIDE AND MOCKING, GOD PROMISES TO MOCK THEM BY WITHHOLDING HIS GRACIOUSNESS.

¹ Grace (*heb = chen = "kane"*) depicts a heart felt response by someone who has something to give to one who has a need. It has the sense of generosity - it does not always mean that the recipient is in dire need. It is frequently used with the phrase "find grace in the eyes" of someone. Frequently used in the sense of a man finding pleasure in the company of a woman. Noah and Moses found grace in the eyes of the LORD giving the sense of pleasant fellowship. This is the sense of this passage. Pleasant fellowship comes from gracious folks. See also James 4:6.