

**PROVERBS, USER MANUAL FOR LIFE IN CHRIST
THE BLUEPRINT FOR A SUCCESSFUL HOME.**

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Psalm 127:1 **A Song of degrees for Solomon. Except the LORD build the house, they labour in vain that build it: except the LORD keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain.**

THE HOUSE HERE IS NOT A BUILDING BUT A FAMILY, A DYNASTY, IF-YOU-PLEASE. THERE IS NO ENDEAVOR AS HONORABLE AS A YOUNG MAN WHO DESIRES TO ESTABLISH HIS HOME. GOD'S WORD IS A TREMENDOUS RESOURCE FOR BUILDING A SUCCESSFUL HOME. IF HE DESIRES TO BUILD A SUCCESSFUL HOME SOLOMON ADVISES OUR YOUNG MAN TO GO TO THE LORD FOR THE BLUEPRINT FOR HIS HOME.

A HOME REQUIRES A BLUEPRINT

EARLIER IN OUR MARRIAGE JANICE AND I USED TO HAVE TIME ON OUR HANDS ON THE WEEKENDS AND WE WOULD GO JOY RIDING. I REMEMBER DRIVING BY A HOUSE ON TOWER HILL ROAD IN CANDIA THAT HAD TO BE ONE UP ON THE HOUSE THAT JACK BUILT. YES THERE WAS NO SQUARE ANGLE ANYWHERE IN THE HOUSE. WHAT WAS REMARKABLE ABOUT THE HOUSE WAS THAT THE BUILDER APPARENTLY TOOK A ROLL OF ROOFING AND STARTED ON THE TOP OF THE HOUSE AND JUST ROLLED IT DOWN THE SIDE OF THE HOUSE. HOLES WERE CUT FOR THE WINDOWS AND DOORS. HE KEPT DOING THIS UNTIL THE ENTIRE HOUSE WAS "ROOFED" AND "SIDED."

THIS IS NOT THE WAY A WELL DESIGNED HOUSE IS BUILT. CAREFUL PLANNING MUST BE USED. PART OF THAT PLANNING HAS TO INCLUDE AN ARCHITECT. HE IS THE ONE WHO CAN LOOK TO THE NEEDS OF THE FAMILY AND TRANSLATE THE NEEDS TO A HOUSE THAT WILL SATISFY EVERY CONCERN. THE OTHER IMPORTANT POINT IS THAT HE IS THE EXPERT. HE KNOWS THE HIDDEN PROBLEMS. HE KNOWS THE CODES THAT NEED TO BE MET SO THE HOUSE WILL ENDURE.

OUT LORD IS JUST LIKE THAT. HE IS THE ARCHITECT OF THE HOME. OUR LESSON TELLS US THAT UNLESS WE REFER TO THE ARCHITECT, THE LORD THE HOUSE WILL FAIL.

A SUCCESSFUL HOME REQUIRES CAREFUL PLANNING.

Prov 24:27 **Finish your outdoor work and get your fields ready; after that, build your house.**

WHEN A YOUNG MAN IS THINKING OF GETTING MARRIED THERE MUST BE CAREFUL PLANNING. HERE THE REFERENCE IS TO GETTING A JOB THAT WILL SUPPORT THE FAMILY. WE MUST REMEMBER THAT ISRAEL WAS LARGELY AGRARIAN. TO FINISH THE OUTDOOR WORK AND GET THE FIELDS READY MEANS TO PLAN CAREFULLY SO THAT THE FAMILY CAN BE PROVIDED FOR. IN TODAY'S WELFARE SOCIETY IT IS EASY FOR A MAN TO FALL BACK ON THE WELFARE SYSTEM AND THEN MOVE IN WITH THE GIRL OF CHOICE. THIS IS NOT THE LORD'S WILL FOR THE MAN WHO NAMES THE LORD AS SAVIOR.

KNOW YOUR RESOURCE LIMITATIONS

Prov 21:20 **In the house of the wise are stores of choice food and oil, but a foolish man devours all he has.**

CAREFUL PLANNING INCLUDES MANAGING THE MONEY OF THE HOME. THE HOUSE OF THE WISE PLANS CAREFULLY SO THAT HIS RESOURCES ARE NOT SQUANDERED. BUDGETS ARE AN ABSOLUTE NECESSITY. THE CHRISTIAN HOME MUST DEVELOP BUDGET SKILLS - THIS REQUIRES CAREFUL PLANNING. ANOTHER PROBLEM THAT COMES IN THE PICTURE IS THE LUST FOR THINGS THAT CAN CAUSE THE SQUANDERING OF THE FAMILY RESOURCES. THE WISE HOUSE CONTROLS THE LUST FOR THINGS BUT THE FOOLISH DEVOURS HIS RESOURCES. THE PICTURE IS GRAPHIC. THE PICTURE OF THE FOOLISH IS THAT OF GLUTTONY WHERE HE EATS WITH ABANDON UNTIL THE "ROOT CELLAR" OF HIS PROVISIONS ARE GONE, LEAVING THE FAMILY TO STARVE.

THE BENEFITS OF THE WISE HOUSE IS THAT THE "MENU" OF THIS HOME HAS CHOICE FOOD AND OIL (FOR LIGHT AND FOOD) EVEN THROUGH THE LEAN TIMES. IT IS NOT ENOUGH FOR THE FAMILY TO MEET THE WEEK TO WEEK NEEDS - THIS IS CALLED "BRINKISM." TODAY'S ECONOMY CALLS FOR THE "FINANCIAL PYRAMID" TO BE A PART OF THE FAMILY BUDGET. AT THE BASE OF THIS PYRAMID IS ENOUGH MONEY IN THE BUDGET FOR THREE MONTHS OF MONEY IN THE BANK TO COVER THE BASIC EXPENSES OF THE FAMILY SHOULD THE BREAD WINNER LOSE HIS JOB¹. THEN THERE NEEDS TO BE FUNDS READY TO TAKE CARE OF HOUSE REPAIRS, AUTO REPAIRS AND THE LIKE. NEXT COMES THE PLANNING FOR THE CHILDREN'S EDUCATION. FINALLY, COMES THE

¹ Church giving should find a proper place here also - right along with the every day needs of the household.

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RETIREMENT PLANS THAT WOULD MAKE UP FOR THE SHORT COMINGS OF "SOCIAL SECURITY." THERE NEEDS TO BE CAREFUL PLANNING IN THE SUCCESSFUL HOUSEHOLD.

THERE ARE MANY OTHER DETAILS THAT THE NEED TO BE ATTENDED TO IN THE FAMILY. CAREFUL PLANNING SHOULD COVER *EVERY* AREA OF THE HOME.

THE SPIRITUAL BANK ACCOUNT NEEDS TO BE UP TO DATE.

Prov 24:3 By wisdom a house is built, and through understanding it is established; 4 through knowledge its rooms are filled with rare and beautiful treasures.

THE SUCCESSFUL HOME REQUIRES A DAILY ACQUISITION OF BIBLICAL WISDOM. I AGREE WITH THE IMPORTANCE OF DAILY DEVOTIONALS IN THE HOME. HOWEVER, THE SPIRITUAL BANK ACCOUNT NEEDS ATTENTION HOUR BY HOUR, MINUTE BY MINUTE. FIRST THERE IS THE EXAMPLE THAT THE PARENTS (ESPECIALLY THE FATHER) SET FOR THE CHILDREN. THEN THERE IS THE NEED FOR THE PARENTS TO SKILLFULLY SHARE THEIR BIBLICAL KNOWLEDGE ON A ONE-ON-ONE BASIS. CHILDREN CAN "TUNE OUT" AT A DEVOTIONAL, BUT IT'S PRETTY HARD TO "TUNE OUT" IF DAD IS TALKING TO HIS SON FACE-TO-FACE. HERE'S WHERE IT IS VERY IMPORTANT FOR DAD AND MOM TO BE VERY PRACTICAL IN THEIR BIBLICAL APPROACH. IT IS NOT ENOUGH TO BE ABLE TO "PARROT" FUNDAMENTALISTIC LINGO. PRACTICAL HOLINESS IS A MUST.

HERE IS WHERE IT IS IMPORTANT FOR THE PARENT TO BE READY TO SEIZE THE MOMENT AND BE READY TO SET THE EXAMPLE OR TO SHARE PRIVATELY WITH HIS CHILD IMPORTANT BIBLICAL TRUTHS. PARENTS WHO HAVE MADE PRACTICAL APPLICATION OF BIBLICAL TRUTHS HAVE THE UNIQUE ADVANTAGE OF SHARING AND LIVING WISDOM. THIS IS REALLY HOW THE SUCCESSFUL HOUSE IS BUILT. IF THIS IS DONE, THE DIVIDENDS ARE "RARE AND BEAUTIFUL TREASURES" - A CHILD WHO WANTS TO BE CHRIST-LIKE JUST LIKE DAD AND MOM.

LOVE AND PEACE NEED TO BE PROMOTED.

Prov 15:16 Better a little with the fear of the LORD than great wealth with turmoil.

Prov 17:1 Better a dry crust with peace and quiet than a house full of feasting, with strife.

ONE OF THE MOST DIFFICULT JOBS OF A PARENT IS WHEN HE HAS TO PUT ON HIS REFEREE'S HAT TO RESOLVE A DISPUTE. LOVE IS NOT SOME SORT OF GUSHING, STICKY SWEET EMOTION THAT "GLUES" THE FAMILY TOGETHER BY VIRTUE OF ITS STICKINESS. LOVE IS A COMBINATION OF A RESPECT/FEAR OF THE PARENTS' AUTHORITY AND THE ATTRACTION THAT THE CHILD HAS FOR HIS (HER) ATTRACTION TO BE WITH MOM OR DAD. THERE IS AT ONCE THE ATTRACTION OF DAD'S AND MOM'S CHRIST-LIKE PERSON ON THE CHILD AND THE FORCE OF THEIR AUTHORITY AS PARENT. LOVE HAS TO BE TOUGH AT TIMES.

BIBLICAL WORD PICTURES OF THE DESTRUCTION OF THE HOME.

Prov 11:29 He who brings trouble on his family will inherit only wind, and the fool will be servant to the wise.

Prov 14:1 The wise woman builds her house, but with her own hands the foolish one tears hers down.

Prov 26:21 As coals are to burning coals, and wood to fire; so is a contentious man to kindle strife.

THERE IS NOTHING MORE DISRUPTIVE TO A FAMILY THAN THE SPIRIT OF A HUSBAND, WIFE, OR CHILD THAT IS TROUBLESOME, CRITICAL, OR ARGUMENTATIVE. MANY TIMES THE PROBLEM COMES FROM LACK OF RESPECT FOR THE "CHAIN OF COMMAND" OR DISREGARD FOR THE FEELINGS OF OTHERS. CERTAINLY A CONTENTIOUS SPIRIT COMES FROM A SELF-CENTERED PERSON. **THE TRAGEDY OF SUCH A HOME IS THAT THE PERSON WHO IS CONTENTIOUS IS NOT BUILDING UP THE HOUSEHOLD BUT RATHER TEARING IT DOWN.**

SEVERAL PICTURES ARE USED IN THESE VERSES TO DEPICT THE TROUBLESOME HOME. **THE FIRST PICTURE IS THAT OF A WIND STORM** - NOT JUST AN EMPTY WIND BUT A VIOLENT WIND THAT LEAVES IN ITS PLACE THE SHATTERED PIECES OF WHAT WAS A HOME. NO MEMBER OF THE FAMILY HAS THE RIGHT TO MAKE FOOLISH DECISIONS WITHOUT REGARD OF THE REST OF THE FAMILY. TROUBLE CAUSED BY FOOLISH SELFISH ACTIONS IS LIKE A HURRICANE LEAVING ITS PATH DESTRUCTION.

NEXT IS THE PICTURE OF THE DEMOLITION OF A HOUSE. TO ILLUSTRATE THIS, CONSIDER AN EMPTY LOT IN A CITY. WE HAVE SUCH A LOT ON THE CORNER OF BRIDGE AND ELM STREET. WHAT STOOD THERE BEFORE WAS AN OLD BUILDING THAT WAS PART OF MANCHESTER'S HISTORICAL HERITAGE. THE BUILDING WAS TORN DOWN TO MAKE ROOM FOR A MODERN ONE AND THEN THE DEVELOPER WAS NOT ABLE TO FINISH THE PROJECT FOR WHATEVER REASON. SO WE NOW HAVE AN EMPTY LOT WHERE ONCE STOOD A BEAUTIFUL EXAMPLE OF MANCHESTER'S MILL YARD ARCHITECTURE. MANY HOMES ARE LIKE THAT. WHAT COULD HAVE BEEN A BEAUTIFUL CONTINUATION OF THE FAMILY NAME CAN BE TORN DOWN BY SELFISH, FOOLISH MEMBERS OF THE

FAMILY. THE HUSBAND HAS THE RESPONSIBILITY TO BUILD HIS HOME ON THE FOUNDATION OF WISDOM. *THE WIFE OF THE FAMILY HAS A SPECIAL RESPONSIBILITY TO BUILD ON THE FOUNDATION THAT THE HUSBAND LAYS.*

THE THIRD PICTURE IS THAT OF A HOUSE FIRE OUT OF CONTROL. A HUSBAND WHO IS ABUSIVE, SELF CENTERED AND IS GIVEN TO A CONTENTIOUS SPIRIT IS LIKE A WILDFIRE DESTROYING EVERYTHING IN ITS PATH. THE END OF SUCH A MAN IS ASHES WHERE A HOME USED TO BE.

IT'S SO IMPORTANT TO FOLLOW THE BLUEPRINT THAT GOD'S WORD HAS PROVIDED FOR THE SUCCESSFUL HOME. TO DO OTHERWISE IS TO INVITE CHAOS AND DESTRUCTION IN THE HOME.