

**PROVERBS, USER MANUAL ON LIFE IN CHRIST
DIVINE TRUTHS REGARDING EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP**

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LEADERSHIP AUTHORITY IS GOD'S DESIGN FOR THE DIRECTION AND PRESERVATION OF SOCIETY. IF WE COULD POINT A FINGER AT A SINGLE CAUSE OF THE BREAKDOWN OF A SOCIETY AND THE FAMILY UNIT IT COULD VERY WELL BE THE REJECTION OF AUTHORITY AND THE REJECTION OF DIVINELY INSTITUTED LEADERSHIP. NEVER BEFORE IN OUR NATION'S HISTORY HAS GOVERNMENT AND THE FAMILY BEEN CHALLENGED BY OUTRIGHT REBELLION AGAINST DIVINE AUTHORITY.

Prov 21:1 **The king's heart is in the hand of the LORD, as the rivers of water: he turneth it whithersoever he will.**

THE COMPARISON HERE IS OF A MIGHTY RIVER AND A KING. BOTH ARE POWERFUL. NO MAN CAN CHANGE THEIR COURSE. HOWEVER, GOD'S CREATIVE ACT IN THE RIVER'S BEDROCK DIRECTS THE RIVER IN ANY WAY THE LORD, IN HIS CREATION, HAS DECREED. SO IT IS WITH THE KING. THE KING'S HEART IS IN THE HAND OF THE LORD, COURSE AND TURNING ACCORDING TO THE DIVINE ORDER. IT IS GOD'S PLAN THAT THE KING WILL DO THE SOVEREIGN WILL OF THE LORD, AND HE WILL. LEADERSHIP AUTHORITY IS DIVINELY APPOINTED.

TRUE LEADERSHIP IS FOUNDED ON THE MORAL CHARACTER OF GOD.

Prov 16:12 **It is an abomination to kings to commit wickedness: for the throne is established by righteousness.**

THE BASIC FOUNDATION OF PROPER LEADERSHIP IS BUILT ON THE VERY MORAL CHARACTER OF THE LORD. HONESTY, VERACITY, A GRACIOUS ATTITUDE - THE LIST GOES ON. ALL THESE MORAL CHARACTERISTICS ARE FOUNDATIONAL TO EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP. THE ORIGINAL FOR OUR WORD TRANSLATED "RIGHTEOUSNESS" REFERS TO MORAL VIRTUE, JUSTICE, THAT WHICH IS RIGHT. TRUE LEADERSHIP CANNOT BE FOUNDED ON FEAR, INTIMIDATION OR THE EXPECTATION OF GAIN OR REWARD. THIS PRINCIPLE APPLIES TO ALL LEVELS - GOVERNMENT, ORGANIZATIONS, AND ESPECIALLY THE FAMILY. IF THE LEADER IS EMULATING THE "RIGHTNESS" OF THE LORD, HIS LEADERSHIP WILL BE BLESSED BY THE LORD.

A GOOD LEADER HAS A CLEAR POLICY

Prov 16:10 **A divine sentence is in the lips of the king: his mouth transgresseth not in judgment.**

A GOOD LEADER MUST HAVE A CLEAR POLICY. HE SETS DOWN CLEAR GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND GUIDELINES THAT WILL MAKE HIS AREA OF RESPONSIBILITY SUCCEED. A FATHER IS DOING HIS FAMILY A GREAT INJUSTICE IF HE DOES NOT SIT DOWN AND FIGURE OUT CLEAR BIBLICAL OBJECTIVES FOR HIS FAMILY **AND STATE THEM TO THE REST OF THE FAMILY.** I WONDER IF SOME OF THE PROBLEMS WE HAVE WITH THE FAMILY IS THE HOUSEHOLD LEADER'S UNWILLINGNESS TO LIVE UP TO THIS IMPORTANT ROLE OF BEING THE POLICY MAKER OF THE HOME.

NOTE THAT THIS POLICY IS TREATED AS THOUGH IT WAS FROM THE LORD. **IT IS IMPORTANT FOR THE LEADER TO BASE HIS POLICY ON BIBLICAL, MORAL PRINCIPLES.** WHETHER IT IS GOVERNMENT, AN ORGANIZATION (BUSINESS OR OTHERWISE), A LOCAL CHURCH, OR THE FAMILY - GOD WILL NOT BLESS POLICIES THAT GO CONTRARY TO HIS BIBLICAL PRINCIPLES.

TRUE LEADERSHIP IS MAINTAINED BY RIGHTEOUSNESS

Prov 16:13 **Kings take pleasure in honest lips; they value a man who speaks the truth.** 14 **A king's wrath is a messenger of death, but a wise man will appease it.** 15 **When a king's face brightens, it means life; his favor is like a rain cloud in spring.**

NOW, LET'S TURN TO THE SUBJECTS OF THIS LEADERSHIP. A LEADER CAN BE DOING ALL THE RIGHT THINGS BIBLICALLY, BUT IT IS UP TO THOSE UNDER HIS AUTHORITY TO RESPOND BIBLICALLY.

FIRST, LET US LOOK AT VERSE 13 AND APPLY IT TO THE HOME. HONESTY IS ABSOLUTELY IMPORTANT TO THE SUCCESSFUL HOUSEHOLD. **DECEIT** IS THE FIRST-LINE

¹ Some children have a knack for reading dad's face. My youngest daughter once confided in me that when she found out what displeased me, she made a mental note - "don't do that." A sensible and doctrinally correct "policy" on her part.

MEANS OF AVOIDING THE AUTHORITY OF A FATHER. THIS IS TRUE IN EVERY AREA OF AUTHORITY. A FATHER CAN HAVE A GOOD POLICY REGARDING THE CONDUCT OF HIS CHILD BUT IF THE CHILD REBELS AND IS DECEITFUL IN AVOIDING HIS FATHER'S POLICY HE THEN HAS ROBBED THAT HOME OF GOD'S BLESSING. THIS IS VERY IMPORTANT - **GOD WILL BLESS THE HOME WHOSE MEMBERS AVOID DECEIT.** THE TEMPTATION IS (PERHAPS EVEN FOR THE WIFE) TO ASSUME "WHAT HE DOESN'T KNOW WON'T HURT HIM" IN ORDER TO GET AROUND DAD'S POLICY AND TO SATISFY IMMEDIATE DESIRES - THE PRICE TO BE PAID IS THE CLOUD OF FRUSTRATION, UNSPOKEN ANGER BY DAD WHO IS FORCED TO COPE WITH THIS UNDERMINING OF HIS LEADERSHIP. **AVOID TRYING TO GET AROUND DAD'S POLICY.**

VERSE 14 HAS AN IMPORTANT POINT - HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS SHOULD ACTIVELY SEEK OUT WHAT PLEASES THE FATHER SO THAT HIS POLICY CAN BE CARRIED OUT. THE ORIGINAL FOR OUR WORD "APPEASE" MEAN TO DO WHATEVER IS NECESSARY IN ORDER TO AVOID PROVOKING DAD'S DISPLEASURE. *WE ARE NOT PAINTING A PICTURE OF A TANTRUM-DRIVEN MAN WHO IS MANIPULATING HIS FAMILY FOR HIS OWN PERSONAL WHIMS OR DESIRES (THAT WOULD NOT BE A RIGHTEOUS FATHER) BUT RATHER, WE ARE DEPICTING A MAN WHO IS PRAYERFULLY LEADING HIS HOME AND IS LIVING UP TO HIS DIVINELY APPOINTED ROLE AS HEAD OF THE HOME.*

VERSE 15. THIS VERSE ALLUDES TO ANOTHER VERY IMPORTANT BIBLICAL PRINCIPLE AS ILLUSTRATED BY THE SPRING RAIN. **CARRYING OUT A RIGHTEOUS FATHER'S POLICY RESULTS IN THE LORD'S BLESSING ON THAT HOUSE.** WHETHER IT IS IN THE AREA OF GOVERNMENT, AN ORGANIZATION (YES, INCLUDING THE CHURCH) OR THE HOME, THE LORD TEACHES HERE THAT CAUSING THE "KING" TO SMILE BY CARRYING OUT HIS POLICY RESULTS BLESSING. THE SPRING RAIN WAS VERY IMPORTANT IN BIBLICAL TIMES. IN ORDER FOR THE CROP TO TAKE ROOT THE FARMER DEPENDED ON THE SPRING RAIN. SPRING RAIN MEANT GOD'S BLESSING ON THE LAND IN GOOD CROPS. GOOD CROPS MEANT THE FAMILY WOULD PROSPER FOR ANOTHER YEAR.

LET'S APPLY THIS TO THE HOME - PLEASING A RIGHTEOUS FATHER MEANS THAT THAT HOME WILL BE SPIRITUALLY FUNCTIONAL AND READY TO RECEIVE THE LORD'S BLESSING. ALL THE SPIRITUAL PRINCIPLES OF BLESSING WILL COME INTO PLAY BECAUSE NOT ONLY ARE IMPORTANT BIBLICAL PRINCIPLES BEING FULFILLED BUT DAD IS FREED TO FULFILL HIS ROLE AS PROVIDER AND BLESSER² OF THE HOME.

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE RIGHTEOUS LEADER.

Prov 29:2 *When the righteous are in authority, the people rejoice: but when the wicked beareth rule, the people mourn.*

THE PEOPLE WILL MOURN IF THOSE IN AUTHORITY ARE UNJUST. THEY WILL MOURN IF THEY ARE OPPRESSED, BUT MOST OF ALL, THEY WILL MOURN IF THE LORD REMOVES HIS BLESSING FROM THAT NATION. IN THE FAMILY CONTEXT, THE HOME WILL MOURN IF DAD NEGLECTS HIS GOD-GIVEN ROLE AS THE DIVINELY APPOINTED HEAD AND BLESSER OF THE HOME. HERE IS THE TREMENDOUS CHALLENGE TO DAD - **IF YOU NEGLECT YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH THE LORD, YOU ARE DOING YOUR WIFE AND CHILDREN AN INCALCULABLE DISSERVICE.** ALL THESE SPIRITUAL PRINCIPLES OF GOD'S BLESSING THE LEADERSHIP OF THE HOME DEPENDS ON YOUR FULFILLING YOUR RESPONSIBILITY TO LEAD THE HOME **IN RIGHTEOUSNESS.**

MOM, CHILDREN - IF YOUR HUSBAND, YOUR FATHER IS LEADING YOUR HOME ON BIBLICAL PRINCIPLES (EVEN THOUGH HE MAKES MISTAKES, EVEN THOUGH HE IS IMPERFECT) HONOR HIM AND BUILD ON HIS POLICY. YOU HAVE A HEAVEN-SENT RESOURCE FOR A SUCCESSFUL HOUSE-HOLD, THANK GOD AND HONOR IT.

A LEADER'S GODLY CHARACTER AND WISDOM DETERMINE HIS SUCCESS

Prov 20:28 *Mercy and truth preserve the king: and his throne is upholden by mercy.*

² The role of the father of the home blessing those in the home is an overlooked but active principle. Read Gen 27:4, 7, 33; 48:9-20; 49. The father has the divinely appointed role of observing his children, guiding them in the way they should go (the "aiming" principle of Psalm 127:4 - "mighty" = man of valor) and sending them along with his "blessing." Children who refuse to please their father miss out on this blessing.

LET'S BROADEN THE SCOPE OF OUR STUDY FOR A MOMENT. GODLY LEADERSHIP IS ABSOLUTELY IMPORTANT ON A NATIONAL, AN ORGANIZATIONAL AND A FAMILY LEVEL. THE FABRIC OF OUR SOCIETY IS BEING TORN TO SHREDS BECAUSE WE AS A NATION, RIGHT DOWN TO THE FAMILY HAVE NEGLECTED A VERY IMPORTANT BIBLICAL PRINCIPLE: OUR COUNTRY, OUR BUSINESSES, OUR FAMILIES MUST OBSERVE BIBLICAL, MORAL TRUTHS AND SHOW MORAL CHARACTER (SUCH AS MERCY) IF WE EXPECT TO REMAIN AS A PROSPEROUS NATION WITH PROSPEROUS BUSINESS AND FAMILIES THAT NOT FRACTURED BUT ARE SECURE AND ENDURING.

WORD STUDY ON "UPHOLDEN." THE ORIGINAL FOR THIS WORD MEANS TO SUPPORT, COMFORT, ESTABLISH, HOLD UP, REFRESH, STRENGTHEN. WHAT THIS VERSE IS TEACHING IS THAT OUR SUCCESS AS A NATION, AS MILLIONS OF FAMILIES DEPENDS ON GODLY MEN LEADING IN GOD'S TRUTH. EVERY AREA OF OUR NATION DEPENDS ON GODLY MEN WHO SHOW THE LORD'S MORAL CHARACTER AND OBSERVE HIS BIBLICAL PRINCIPLES IN THEIR DAILY WALK. **THIS IS NOT A QUESTION OF SEPARATION OF CHURCH AND STATE - THE CHURCH HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH IT - IT IS A MATTER OF THE SURVIVAL OF OUR NATION (WITH ITS ECONOMIC PROSPERITY) AND OUR FAMILIES AS WE KNOW IT. WE NEED GOD'S BLESSING ON OUR NATION AND OUR FAMILIES IN ORDER TO SURVIVE.** WE ARE NOT PROSPERING AS A NATION BECAUSE OF OUR DEMOCRATIC IDEALS OR BECAUSE WE SOMEHOW ARE SMART ENOUGH TO FIGURE THINGS OUT - **WE ARE PROSPERING AS A NATION BECAUSE GOD IS BLESSING THE LIVES OF GODLY LEADERS AND THE REST OF THE NATION IS ENJOYING GOD'S COMMON GRACE WHERE "THE RAIN FALLS ON THE JUST AND THE UNJUST"**³.

GOD'S ADVISE TO GOOD LEADERS⁴ (ALL PROVERBS REFS.)

THE FOLLOWING IS GOD'S ADVISE TO GOOD LEADERS:

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| 1. LISTEN ONLY TO UPRIGHT ADVISORS:
29:12;25:4, 5. | 4. BE IMPARTIAL AND FAIR IN JUDGMENT:
24:23; 18:5. |
| 2. BEWARE OF PEOPLE WITH ULTERIOR
MOTIVES: 19:6. | 5. DEFEND THE DISADVANTAGED: 31:8, 9. |
| 3. THOROUGHLY EXAMINE IMPORTANT ISSUES:
25:2. | 6. PUNISH THE WICKED: 20:8, 26; 24:24,
25; 17:15. |

³ Mat 5:45

⁴ Taken from Wellsprings of Life, Understanding Proverbs, Donald Orthner.