

Glad Tidings

“And we bring you good tidings of the promise made unto the fathers...” (Acts 13:32)

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God's Law – God's Blessings

(Jerry Fite)

The Book of Proverbs comprises God-inspired-wisdom, offering practical knowledge for all. Especially is this wisdom valuable for young people who lack the experiences of life. The first chapter establishes this purpose of the Proverbs: “*to give prudence to the simple, to the young man knowledge and discretion*” (Proverbs 1:4).

The setting, beginning with Proverbs 1:8, is a father addressing his son, offering him God's wisdom. Chapters 2-7 open with “my son” or “my sons” (Prov 4:1.). Wise instruction and admonition proceeds throughout these chapters as the father exhorts his son to take to heart his teachings. A definite pattern emerges that should foster thought as we read. God's law is set forth as what the son should embrace inwardly and apply in his life. Life's blessings follow reverencing God and obeying His law.

THE HAPPY LIFE

The son should avoid forgetting God's law by keeping God's commands “*for length of days and long life and peace they will add to you.*” (Prov. 3: 1.-2). “*Prolonging thy days*” to the Israelite was more about being able to dwell in the land which was contingent upon obeying the commands of God (Deut. 4:40). However, a son

would not live long on this earth if he was rebellious to his parents' commands (Deut. 21:18-21). Obeying the commands of God brings happiness to an extended life by adding “*peace.*” A good conscience before God and good works toward men will create tranquility, regardless if your length of days is 20 or 80. What a blessing for obeying God's commands!

ULTIMATE RESPECT

Obeying God's commands will produce “*mercy and truth*” in one's character. God's fatherly exhortation is to not let them leave you. Bind them around your neck and write them on your heart. Why? You will “*find favor and high esteem in the sight of God and man*” (Prov. 3:3-4). Mercy is heart felt sympathy that extends a helping hand in kindness. Truth is absolute integrity in word and deed securing confidence in all. Mercy excludes selfishness and hate. Truth excludes all hypocrisy. To be spoken highly of by man is gratifying. But to be esteemed highly, first by God, and then by man is the ultimate respect in life.

PERFECT GUIDANCE

What does God promise you when you trust in Him with all your heart, lean on Him instead of your own understanding and acknowledge Him in all your

ways? The Divine answer is: “*and He will direct thy paths*” (Prov.3:6-7). God's word is “*a lamp unto my feet, and light unto my path*” say those who trust in Jehovah and acknowledge Him in all their ways (Psm. 119:105). It offers general illumination for our path and specific light for each step.

God's directed path does not necessarily avoid rough roads. Just ask Joseph! But as Joseph learned, who kept trusting Jehovah in difficult times, God is always directing us according to His sovereign purpose: “*God meant it for good, to bring to pass as it is this day, to save much people alive*” (Gen. 50:20).

God's path leads to “*life,*” blessing those who fully trust and follow Him (Matt. 7:14). The moment you dread the restrictive way of God, look over your shoulder and take note of the “*broad way*” accommodating all those who lean on their own understanding. They are heading for “*destruction*” (Matt. 7:13). What a blessing for all, especially the young who are just beginning life to be guided by the “*Perfect Guide.*” Perfect guidance, ultimate respect and the happy life await those who embrace God in their heart and obey His commands!