THE PREVIEW OF PROVERBS

**DATE: 9/7/2014 pm**

**TEXT: Proverbs 2**

**INTRODUCTION**

The second chapter of Proverbs presents a complex syllogism of ***“ifs”*** and ***“thens”***

Syllogism - *is a kind of logical argument that applies deductive reasoning to arrive at a conclusion based on two or more propositions that are asserted or assumed*

For example, Solomon develops how that …

- **If** his son (and all readers for that matter) would listen to his Wisdom from the Word of God …

- **Then,** they would find the Blessings of Life

And therefore a kind of Preview for all of the Book of Proverbs

Moreover, such Godly Wisdom will keep young people and anyone else from the influence of evil persons

Let’s pray and look at …

***“A Preview of Proverbs”*** from chapter 2

**~~~Prayer~~~**

**I. GOD’S “PREREQUISITE” FOR PERSONAL BLESSING**

Found in **vs. 1-4**

**v.1** has the 1st ***“If”*** (the ***“Then”*** is found beginning in **v.5**)

The use of the word ***“If”*** implies *a condition* on which something depends, **a Prerequisite**

There are 2 Conditions here that are Prerequisite to being *Personally Blessed*

I know of no believer that does not want to be Happy

We all pursue happiness, but mostly in the wrong places and in the wrong ways

So, what is the Right way and where is the Right place?

Beginning in **v. 1** -

**A. ‘Receive and Obey’ God’s Word – v.1**

***“My son, if thou wilt receive My Words, and hide My commandments with thee;”***

Of course the ***“Words & Commandments”***here are speaking of God’s Word

And it’s what we are to do with the Bible that is important

***“receive & hide”***

- To ***“receive”*** is to Accept the Bible

- To ***“hide”*** speaks of Treasuring the Bible

To Store it up

To Guard it as Precious

David said in **Psalm 119:11 – *“Thy Word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against Thee”***

The greater thought is to Cherish and not Reject the Counsel of God

**‘Receive and Obey’ God’s Word**

The second **Prerequisite** is to …

**B. ‘Pursue’ Godly Wisdom – vs. 2-4**

There are 6 words in these 3 verses that show us the ***‘Pursuit’*** of Godly Wisdom

To **Pursue** means to *Follow after* *someone or something*

**v. 2 – *“incline”* *“apply”***

**v.3 – *“criest”* *“liftest”***

**v. 4 - *“seekest” “searchest”***

The point of *receiving* and *hiding* God’s Word …

Is that we might ***“incline”*** and ***“apply”*** it

**Incline** – *means to move toward a particular course of action*

**Apply** – *means to make use of something to achieve a result*

The thought is to Pursue God’s Word to such a degree

That we *search* (**v.4**) for Wisdom and Understanding

… Like ***“silver”*** or ***“hid treasure”***

Once again, we find Wisdom and Understanding linked together

They are not synonymous though they are related

Wisdom Develops from Understanding

To a degree, Wisdom is the Goal and Understanding is the Means, thereto

In **v.3** we find ***“knowledge”*** added

Once again, there is a development of the Truth

Let me compare these virtues to a pyramid

*Knowledge* is the Foundation, *Understanding* is

Built on that, and *Wisdom* is the Capstone

As *knowledge* is obtained, then *understanding* is achieved by study and reflection

Our Wisdom then can make the right decisions

Once again, the developing thought is …

…that this process of *knowledge, understanding*,

… and *wisdom* are ultimately rooted in the Word of God

Hence, the sacred writer urges his reader to Receive (Accept) God’s Word

So that, we Receive the ultimate Blessings in Life

***“receive My Words, and hide My commandments”***

***If*** we seek and search for Wisdom like we might search for a hidden treasure …

Then the Blessings listed in the following vs. will become available to us

And so, these first 4 vs. eloquently and articulately set forth the primary Conditions for the blessings to follow

**GOD’S “PREREQUISITE” FOR PERSONAL BLESSING …**

**Receive God’s Words and Search for Wisdom**

**II. GOD’S “PROMISES” FOR THE EARNEST BELIEVER**

There are 4 thoughts found in **vs. 5-9**

We now have the ***“Then”*** to the ***“If”*** of **v.1**

**1:7** – We are now on our way to Knowing & Loving God

In the Book of Proverbs, the words ***“path”*** and ***“way”*** (and their plurals) are found nearly 100 x’s (**v.8**)

Wisdom is not only a Person to Love [**1:20**], but Wisdom is also a Path to Walk

The Emphasis in **chapters 2, 3**, and **4** is on the Blessings God's people enjoy, when they walk on Wisdom's Path

The Path of Wisdom leads to Life, but the way of Folly leads to Death

**Proverbs 14:12 *– “There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death”***

(This verse is repeated exactly in another Proverb – **16:25, Ps. 14:1** & **53:1** are also repeated exactly)

When we walk on the Path of Wisdom …

We enjoy 3 wonderful assurances

Wisdom … *Protects, Directs, and Perfects* our Path

**A. ‘Intimate Knowledge’ of God Himself – v.5**

***“Then shalt thou understand the fear of the LORD, and find the knowledge of God”***

It’s one thing to Fear God

It’s another, to Understand its implications (the results)

Throughout the Bible, the Fear of the Lord is set forth as a very positive spiritual virtue

**Psalm 19:9 – *“The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring for ever…”***

**Proverbs 10:27a *– “The fear of the LORD prolongeth days”***

**Proverbs 14:26a – *“In the fear of the LORD is strong confidence”***

**Proverbs 14:27a – *“The fear of the LORD is a fountain of life”***

**Proverbs 16:6b – *“… and by the fear of the LORD men depart from evil”***

**Proverbs 19:23a – *“The fear of the LORD tendeth to life”***

**Proverbs 22:4 – *“By … the fear of the LORD are riches, and honour, and life”***

As we willingly Receive God’s Word and Search for Wisdom

The Blessing is found in the development of our Understanding of Who God actually is

**‘Intimate Knowledge’ of God Himself**

The next Promise is …

**B. Wisdom for ‘Successful Living’ – v.6**

***“For the Lord giveth wisdom: out of His mouth cometh knowledge and understanding”***

The Source of all Wisdom is God Himself

**I Corinthians 1:24, 30** makes it clear that all Wisdom is found in Christ

***“But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God”***

***“But of Him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption:”***

The mention of Wisdom coming out of God’s mouth refers to His inspired Word

The word inspiration literally means *“God breathed”*

When we speak; words are breathed out of our mouths

Inspiration therefore refers to God speaking

The inspired Word of God contains *knowledge*, *understanding*, and *wisdom*

The thought goes back to **v. 1** where we are encouraged to receive His Words and hide His Commandments within us

The greater thought is that the Wisdom of God comes from the Word of God

It is, in obeying God’s Word, that we find Success

**‘Intimate Knowledge’ of God Himself**

**Wisdom for ‘Successful Living’**

The next Promise is …

**C. ‘Protection’ from Harmful Influences- vs. 7, 8**

**v. 7a - *“He layeth up sound wisdom for the righteous:***

To ***“lay up”***means to put something in store

We might call it *lay away* today

It’s going to be there when we need it!

When we walk upright …

The promise is that Wisdom will be there when we need it most

***“Sound”*** – *something in good working order, complete, valid, a firm foundation*

**v. 7b - *“He is a buckler to them that walk uprightly”***

The word ***“buckler”*** is referring to a shield

What a wonderful truth

God Himself becomes a shield (protection) to those who live their lives uprightly

And so as we order our lives by the Word of God,

We will of necessity develop upright living

And, as we do, God will protect the upright and also give wisdom as a fringe benefit

It all begins with the Premise found in **vs. 1, 3, & 4**

The Premise of Receiving God’s Word & Searching for it

Godly wisdom obtain from His Word, Protects us

**Ephesians 6:16 – *“Above all, taking the shield of faith…”***

**Psalm 5:12 – *“For thou, LORD, wilt bless the righteous; with favour wilt thou compass him as with a shield”***

**Psalm 84:11 – *“For the LORD God is a sun and shield: the LORD will give grace and glory: no good thing will He withhold from them that walk uprightly”***

The thought is continued about Protection from Harmful Influences in …

**v. 8 – *“He keepeth the paths of judgment, and preserveth the way of his saints”***

The thought here, is of God being our Guard

**Acts 28:16 – *“And when we came to Rome, the centurion delivered the prisoners to the captain of the guard: but Paul was suffered to dwell by himself with a soldier that kept him”***

He keeps us on the path of Right by helping us make right choices (Judgments)

He also keeps anything from getting us while on the path

To ***“preserve”*** means He keeps us from corruption

He safeguards, defends, cares for us

**‘Intimate Knowledge’ of God Himself**

**Wisdom for ‘Successful Living’**

**‘Protection’ from Harmful Influences**

The 4th Promise is …

**D. ‘Mastery’ in the Truly Important Areas of Life – v. 9**

***“Then shalt thou understand righteousness, and judgment, and equity; yea, every good path”***

Again we find a ***“Then”*** in conjunction with the many ***“If”***

Solomon says ***“Then shalt thou understand…”***

We have already covered *righteousness*, *judgment* and *equity* and what they mean

We will have the ability to Comprehend

In short, as God’s people receive the Word of God and develop Godly Wisdom,

- They will have the insight to make right decisions in life

- We will be Just in our dealing with others

- And, we will Comprehend what’s going on

**Hymn:** How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord, is laid for your faith in His excellent Word!

**GOD’S “PREREQUISITE” FOR PERSONAL BLESSING**

**GOD’S “PROMISES” FOR THE EARNEST BELIEVER**

**III. GOD’S “PRESCRIPTION” FOR THE BELIEVER’S WALK**

Is found in **vs. 10-20**

We find in these verses Solomon teaching us how to follow a course of action that will keep us right

**Prescription** – *is a remedy, to recommend a particular course of action or treatment as a remedy for something, a way of making something right*

The right course of action is to …

**A. Walk ‘Wisely and Circumspectly’ - vs. 10, 11**

Nobody likes taking medicine

But it shouldn’t be so with God’s Medicine

***“When wisdom entereth into thine heart,***

***… and knowledge is pleasant unto thy soul;”***

The word ***“when”*** means *at what time or in what situation, at the occurrence of, the fact of something happening*

The *something happening* would be ***“wisdom enter[ing] into thine heart”*** or ***“when … knowledge is pleasant unto thy soul”***

This thought builds upon the previous 9 verses

***“When wisdom”*** has been absorbed in our hearts as described and ***“when godly knowledge is sweet in our soul,”***

***“Then . . .”*** (Though the word *then* is not found in the next verse, the concept is clearly implied)

Thus, when godly Wisdom and Knowledge have been

absorbed,

***“then” …*** *“****discretion shall preserve thee,”***

***“understanding shall keep thee”***

Discretion *is having right discernment which leads to*

*right decisions or judgments*

***“Discretion”*** is the discernment which enables a person to judge critically of what is correct and proper, united with caution (Discern –notice something that is not immediately obvious)

It is very similar in principle to the thought of ***“judgment”***as noted in **v. 9**

The thought is how Discretion …

(which is derives from godly wisdom)

… will Guard and Protect us from the pitfalls of life

2 Specific pitfalls are noted here

**Walk ‘Wisely and Circumspectly’**

**B. Walk ‘Separate from Sin and Sinners’ - vs. 12-19**

When we Absorb the Word of God and Search after godly wisdom,

The wise Discretion which results will direct us away from the paths of *evil men*

**1.** The ***“evil man”* – vs. 12-15**

**v. 12 - *“To deliver thee from the way of the evil man, from the man that speaketh froward things;”***

Again we see the principle of Separation

***“to deliver thee”***

**Psalm 1:1 -** ***“blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful”* -**

When God’s Word saturates our heart, producing godly wisdom …

It will deliver us from ***“the way of the evil man”***

It will keep us separated

- It will give us the good sense to avoid the haunts of the ungodly

The places the wicked hang out

- It will make us uncomfortable in their places of entertainment and in their circles

The Character of the world’s Crowd is further described in …

**v.13 – *“Who leave the paths of uprightness, to walk in the ways of darkness;”***

Though Solomon wrote over 3,000 years ago, the principles have not changed at all

Notice how ***“evil men”*** are described as departing from ***“uprightness”***

As simple as it may sound, *evil* is the departure from doing what is right

Moreover, *evil* and *ungodly men* are connected

with ***“darkness”***

Darkness is the realm of evil whether spiritually,

morally, criminally, or in any other way

In **John 3:19**, Jesus said that ***“men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil”***

Sin is almost always practiced under the cover of darkness

Godly Wisdom will shed light on, and Prevent and Protect a person from such sin

Moreover, the absorption of God’s Word and of godly

wisdom will protect a godly person from evil men who also …

**v.** **14 – *“rejoice to do evil, and delight in the frowardness of the wicked; Whose ways are crooked, and they froward in their paths”***

The world’s crowd laughs [***“rejoice”***] about their sin

They take pleasure [***“delight”***] in the perversity of other wicked men

They are crooked in their dealings and devious in their ways

The word *“****froward”*** in this context has the sense of being *devious* or *perverse, twisted*

The greater point is that godly wisdom will Protect a wise person from the Pitfalls of getting hooked up with criminal and corrupt characters

**I Corinthians 15:33 – *“Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners”***

Not only is there the ***“evil man”***

But also …

**2.** The ***“strange woman”* – vs. 16-19**

We now see, beginning in **v.16** the description of what the Bible calls the ***“strange woman”***

Like the ***“evil man”*** …

… the ***“strange woman”*** is to be avoided

The same godly wisdom just described will also protect a young person from an immoral person

There is something interesting about the language here

Back in **v.1** the word ***“son”*** is what they call reflexive

It is gender neutral, either gender

You could substitute the word ***“daughter”*** there

That is, the same is true for a godly young woman

Godly wisdom will keep her from immoral men

**v.16 –** ***“To deliver thee from the strange woman,***

***even from the stranger which flattereth with her***

***words”***

Throughout the Scriptures, a ***“strange woman”*** refers to a woman of loose morals

***“Strange”*** means *unfamiliar, not known or experienced previously*

She is someone who is willing to engage in either pre-marital or extra-marital relationships

In **Proverbs 22:14** and **23:7**, a strange woman is likened unto a pit or a trap

One that is difficult to get out of

And the world is full of such females today

Such immoral females have no scruples about

enticing or seducing someone by what they say or what they wear

**Job 31:1** says- ***“I made a covenant with mine eyes; why then should I think upon a maid?”***

**v.17 – *“Which forsaketh the guide of her youth, and forgetteth the covenant of her God”***

Females of loose and easy virtue often have turned their backs upon the moral training they received from their parents

In most cases they received no moral training at all

In any event, immoral females have forgotten the basic moral covenant of God to reserve themselves

exclusively for a husband

**v. 18, 19 – *“For her house inclineth unto death, and her paths unto the dead” “None that go unto her return again, neither take they hold of the paths of life”***

There is something spiritually debilitating about immorality

Those who give themselves unto it, are headed down the path of spiritual death

In some cases, infidelity or promiscuity leads to physical death as enraged husbands or jealous boyfriends murder those involved

However, the greater thought here likely refers to spiritual deadening

The prophet Hosea wrote …

**4:11 - *“Whoredom and wine and new wine take away the heart”***

The thought is that immorality utterly deadens someone to the things of God

Those who are committing fornication or adultery are not interested in the things of God

Homosexuals often are totally militant against anything pertaining to God

Sexual sin prevents someone from taking hold of the paths of true spiritual life

The indulgences of the flesh supersede and blind spiritual interest

Not surprising, that the devil continually promotes immodesty, intoxication, sensuous music, and promiscuity

All of which lead to immorality

He knows that immorality deadens men and women to the things of God

Thus, the collective thought here is that the absorption of the Word of God and the gaining of godly wisdom will protect someone from both crooked and immoral individuals

Both lead to spiritual imprisonment and endless

trouble in life

**Walk ‘Wisely and Circumspectly’**

**Walk ‘Separate from Sin and Sinners’**

**C. Walk ‘In Goodness and Righteousness’ – v. 20**

***“That thou mayest walk in the way of good men, and keep the paths of the righteous”***

As this forceful chapter starts to come to its logical and spiritual conclusion

God’s people are again reminded to walk in a Godly Way

As we absorb the Word of God and search for godly wisdom, it will keep us from all manner of evil in life

**GOD’S “PREREQUISITE” FOR PERSONAL BLESSING**

**GOD’S “PROMISE” FOR THE EARNEST BELIEVER**

**GOD’S “PRESCRIPTION” FOR THE BELIEVER’S WALK**

The last thing found in **Proverbs 2** is …

**IV. GOD’S “PROVISION” FOR BELIEVERS AND UNBELIEVERS**

Found in **vs. 21, 22**

**A. ‘Contentment and Stability’ for the Believer – v.21**

***“For the upright shall dwell in the land, and the perfect shall remain in it”***

It is always helpful to remember that Solomon is writing from a Jewish perspective

God had given the Land to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and his twelve sons

The Land of Israel was the place God had promised to

Bless Israel

It was a blessing and their home

Solomon’s point here is that those who walked uprightly before God

Would remain in peace and tranquility in the land God had promised them

The thought inherent in the word ***“perfect”*** is of *whole-hearted dedication*

**‘Contentment and Stability’ for the Believer**

While on the other hand, there will be …

**B. ‘Trouble and Destruction’ for the Unbeliever – v. 22**

***“But the wicked shall be cut off from the earth, and the transgressors shall be rooted out of it”***

The promise of God found in **Deuteronomy 28** and elsewhere is that disobedience and sin on the part of Israel would ultimately conclude in them being forced out of their land

It very well may be that Solomon was warning that those who disregarded God’s Word would eventually be uprooted out of their land

The hindsight of history has demonstrated that it is exactly what God did to Israel after centuries of rebellion and disobedience against Him

That certainly happened several hundred years later

However, in its greater sense, all wicked will eventually be cut off from the earth in death and will stand before the Great White Throne Judgment

In that day, all unsaved men will be cast into the Lake of Fire forever

Also implied is that ungodly Jews would not be resurrected to live in the land but would be forever

uprooted out of it

Implied also is the prospect of the resurrection of the godly Israelite in which they would be raised

in that day to again live in the land promised to Abraham

Solomon’s advice was essentially that godly wisdom derived from the Word of God resulting in righteous and dedicated living would bring the blessing of God upon them

The greater point of Proverbs 2 is that the Word of God will bring godly wisdom which will bring wise guidance and blessing both now and forever

To the contrary, a lack of godly wisdom will bring nothing but trouble

**GOD’S “PREREQUISITE” FOR PERSONAL BLESSING**

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