

PROVERBS: ALIGNING TO GOD'S FIXED MORAL ORDER FOR BLESSING

Part I: Adopting The Right FOUNDATION For Enjoying God's Blessing In Life

(Proverbs 1:1-7)

I. Introduction

- A. It is apparent that many unsaved people do not enjoy fulfillment in this life. Broken marriages, deteriorating family life and political corruption all reveal this need in our secular world. By the same token, we all know many **Christians** who live in unrest and grief as well!
- B. However, **some** believers seem to come out "on top" in life, never getting under the duress that life throws at them, and always seem to be fulfilled mentally, emotionally, spiritually, and in other areas of life.
- C. The book of Proverbs points the way as to **why** this difference exists, and shows us **how** we can escape the defeatism route to enjoy consistent divine blessing as a way of life as follows:

II. Adopting The Right FOUNDATION For Enjoying God's Blessing In Life, Proverbs 1:1-7.

- A. Proverbs reveals a **fixed, moral ORDER** to which one must align himself if he would enjoy God's blessing:
 1. Archaeological studies show Proverbs conforms in literary genre to the Egyptian *sboyet* having a prose title (1:1), a long admonition on the value of instruction (1:2-9:18) followed by collected sayings (10:1-31:31), "The Book of Proverbs and Ancient Wisdom Literature," *Bib. Sac.*, 136:543, p. 221-238.
 2. The Egyptian *sboyet* in turn was formed to instruct Egyptian princes on what was believed to be a fixed, moral order that, if followed, would minimize risk of failure and maximize one's finding happiness, *Ibid.*
 3. Accordingly, Solomon used the Egyptian *sboyet* format to reveal that **Israel's God authored** that fixed, moral order, so that man experiences either blessing or a loss of blessing in accord with how well his life's decisions and actions align with God's fixed moral order!
 4. The Egyptian word for this order is *ma'at* where the Hebrew word is *hokma*, "wisdom", *Ibid.*, p. 232f.
- B. Using this information, we examine Proverbs 1:1-7 to discern the way we can adopt the right **foundation** of that **fixed, moral ORDER** to enjoy God's blessing in life (as follows):
 1. The **starting** point, or the **FOUNDATION** for aligning to God's fixed, moral order to gain His blessing is a healthy respect ("fear") of Israel's God, Proverbs 1:7a. Despising this healthy respect for Israel's God to where one disdains respecting Him belongs to those who are morally deficient, and brings inevitable failure and unhappiness in this life, Proverbs 1:7b.
 2. Accordingly, the book of Proverbs, in **STARTING** with the call for respecting Jahweh, imparts the following invaluable benefits for various needs among humans, Proverbs 1:2-6:
 - a. Proverbs reveals God's *hokma*, His fixed moral order, Proverbs 1:2a.
 - b. It also reveals thereby what correction is needed for one to align to that order for blessing, 1:2b.
 - c. Proverbs exposes words of insight into whether one is aligned with that correct order or not, 1:2c.
 - d. If applied, Proverbs acts to discipline one into a lifestyle that makes him do what is fittingly right and fair so as to align with God's fixed moral order to blessing, Proverbs 1:3.
 - e. If applied, Proverbs takes a foolishly naive person and makes him sort out what **not** to think and do, making even young people discrete here, Proverbs 1:4.
 - f. Proverbs even equips those who are **already** somewhat aligned with God's moral order and who are **open** to gaining **MORE** insight to be even **MORE** discerning and gain God's **added** guidance in understanding deep truths in its riddles, parables and sayings, Proverbs 1:5-6.

Lesson: The degree to which one RESPECTS the Bible's God and heeds His Word determines the degree to which he aligns to the fixed moral order of God and thus gains blessing in this life!

Application: If one (1) STARTS thinking and acting with a healthy RESPECT for the God of the Bible, (a) he gains correction toward better alignment with God's fixed moral order that minimizes failure and maximizes his gaining blessing, (b) he gains insight to that end, (c) he is disciplined to adjust his waywardnesses to that end, (d) he understands what to reject as wrong thinking to that end and (e) he continues to GAIN insight and discern guidance toward the end of aligning with that order for ADDED blessings! (2) Failing to START with a respect for Jahweh breeds all sorts of failures!