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"Pride goeth before destruction and a haughty spirit before a fall." ~ Proverbs 16:18

We are told that this is the center verse of Proverbs in the Hebrew Bible.

Pride is a very serious issue as this verse clearly reveals. The Bible has abundant teaching on pride and humility. In fact, the Bible stands apart from all of the supposed "holy" books of World religions with this distinctive feature. Beginning in Genesis, pride is viewed as the root and essence of sin; it is seeking for oneself the honor and glory that properly belongs to God.

Paul shows us that the cross is the ground for humility, for apart from it neither Jew nor Gentile has any grounds for boasting:

"But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world" (Galatians 6:14).

Pride's MEANING

Definition

Pride is a conceited sense of one's superiority, "Be not wise in your own conceits" (Romans 12:16b). It is thinking of ourselves more highly than we ought to think (Romans 12:3). It is the corruption of self-love, selfadmiration, self-flattery and self-exaltation.

Webster defines pride as "Inordinate self-esteem; an unreasonable conceit of one's own superiority in talents, ability, beauty, wealth, accomplishments, rank or elevation in office, which manifests itself in lofty airs, distance, reserve, and often contempt of others." (American

Dictionary of the English Language)

Biblical Synonyms

- ❖ Haughtiness (Isaiah 2:11, 17; 16:6; Jeremiah 48:29)
- ❖ Arrogance (Proverbs 8:13; Isaiah 13:11; Jeremiah 48:29)
- ❖ Conceit (Proverbs 18:11; 26:5, 12, 16; 28:11)
- ❖ Puffed Up (I Corinthians 4:6, 18-19; 5:2; 13:4; Colossians 2:18)
- ❖ Boasters (Romans 1:30; II Timothy 3:2)
- ❖ Loftiness (Isaiah 2:17; Jeremiah 48:29)
- ❖ Highminded (Romans 11:20; I Timothy 6:27; II Timothy 3:4)

Biblical Antonyms

- ❖ Humble (Proverbs 16:19; 29:23; Isaiah 57:15; James 4:6, 10)
- ❖ Meekness (II Corinthians 10:1; Galatians 5:23; 6:1; Ephesians 4:2; Colossians 3:12; I Timothy 6:11; II Timothy 2:25; Titus 3:2)
- ❖ Lowliness (Ephesians 4:20)
- ❖ Lowliness of mind (Philippians 2:3)
- ❖ Humility of mind (Colossians 3:12)
- ❖ Sober (Romans 12:3)

Pride's ORIGIN

A search for the origin of pride will lead us straight to Satan.

“Thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty, thou hast corrupted thy wisdom by reason of thy brightness” (Ezekiel 28:17).

Pride is a direct attack upon the person and glory of God, and Satan is the embodiment of it. He ceased to delight in the perfection of God, and became enchanted with himself. He ceased to worship the CREATOR (God) and began to worship the CREATURE (himself). He was no longer a reflector (Lucifer) of God's glory but became a usurper and opponent of it.

His philosophy is the foundation of the Religious System, “Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen” (Romans 1:25).

The Record of Lucifer's Prideful Fall

The Plan

The fall of Lucifer was preceded by a display of self-adoration, self-aspiration and self-exaltation. This is confirmed by the details of his plan as recorded in Isaiah 14:13-14:

- ❖ I will ascend into heaven,
- ❖ I will exalt my throne above the stars of God:
- ❖ I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north:
- ❖ I will ascend above the heights of the clouds;
- ❖ I will be like the most High.

The Results

- ❖ Lucifer became profane (Ezekiel 28:16).
- ❖ Lucifer's wisdom was corrupted (Ezekiel 28:17).
- ❖ Lucifer's sanctuaries were defiled (Ezekiel 28:18).
- ❖ Lucifer became Satan (Hebrew for "adversary").
- ❖ Lucifer became the Devil. As with those who get "caught," Lucifer began to accuse others. He became the accuser. The word Devil means "accuser" or "slanderer."
- ❖ He accuses and slanders God (Genesis 3:4).
- ❖ He accuses and slanders man (Job 1:9; 2:4-5; Revelation 12:10).

Lucifer influenced and led others to follow his fall.

He had (and still has) an agenda to usurp all authority and take control of the universe; thus he launched a strategic offensive which encompassed:

- ❖ An Angelic Host of Heaven, and later,
- ❖ The Federal Head of Humanity on Earth (Adam)

Lucifer was condemned. (Ezekiel 28:16-19; Isaiah 14:12-17; Matthew 25:41; The full execution of the penalty has been delayed).

Pride's EXTENSIVENESS

It Has Saturated the World

"For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the PRIDE OF LIFE, is not of the Father, but is of the world" (I John 2:16).

It Has Saturated the Heart

"For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, PRIDE, foolishness: All these evil things come from within, and defile the man" (Mark 7:21-23).

Pride's PATH

It Is a Path of Self Exaltation

"... being lifted up with pride ..." (I Timothy 3:6).

It Is A Path of Hardness

"... his heart was lifted up, and his mind hardened in pride ..." (Daniel 5:20).

It Is a Path of Deception

"Thy terribleness hath deceived thee, and the pride of thine heart ..." (Jeremiah 49:16).

It Is A Path of Bondage

"... pride compasseth them about as a chain ..." (Psalm 73:6).

It is A Path of Contention

"Only by pride cometh contention ..." (Proverbs 13:10).

"He that is of a proud heart stirreth up strife" (Proverbs 28:25).

This is true of church conflicts, politics, war every aspect of life!

It Is a Path of Separation (from God)

"... the proud he knoweth afar off" (Psalm 138:6).

"Every one that is proud in heart is an abomination to the LORD ..." (Proverbs 16:5).

Pride's COUNTERPART

Pride has a devoted companion! Pride is the precursor of ruin.

"Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall" (Proverbs 16:18).

"Before destruction the heart of man is haughty, and before honour is humility" (Proverbs 18:12).

Shame

"When pride cometh, then cometh shame: but with the lowly is wisdom" (Proverbs 11:2).

Pride's DOCUMENTATION

Birth and Rank

The destruction and shame that accompany pride is not just words. It can be documented over and over in Scripture. Satan is the first and primary proof. Then there is Adam and Eve. Below are a few more examples (be sure to be on the lookout for pride's companion):

- ❖ Asahel (II Samuel 2:18-23)
- ❖ Benhadad (I Kings 20:3, 11, 32)
- ❖ Babylon (Isaiah 47:10-11)
- ❖ Azariah (Jeremiah 43:2-11)
- ❖ Nebuchadnezzar (Daniel 4:30-31)
- ❖ Edom (Obadiah 3-4)
- ❖ Herod Agrippa (Acts 12:21-23)

Pride's CONTRAST

Our Lord Jesus Christ came into a world filled with pride and manifested the divine nature.

“Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, He humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father” (Philippians 2:5-11).

Let us see some examples of this humiliation (each of these are areas where men have great pride):

“Is not this the carpenter's son? is not his mother called Mary? and his brethren, James, and Joses, and Simon, and Judas?” (Matthew 13:55).

Wealth

“And Jesus saith unto him, The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay His head” (Matthew 8:20).

Community

“And He came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, He shall be called a Nazarene” (Matthew 2:23).

“And Nathanael said unto him, Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth? Philip saith unto him, Come and see” (John 1:46).

Reputation

“The Son of man came eating and drinking, and they say, Behold a man gluttonous, and a winebibber, a friend of publicans and sinners. But wisdom is justified of her children” (Matthew 11:19).

Appearance

“... He hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see Him, there is no beauty that we should desire Him” (Isaiah 53:2).

Independence

“And Joanna the wife of Chuza Herod’s steward, and Susanna, and many others, which ministered unto Him of their substance” (Luke 8:3).

Learning

“And the Jews marvelled, saying, How knoweth this man letters, having never learned?” (John 7:15).

Superiority

“For whether is greater, he that sitteth at meat, or he that serveth? is not he that sitteth at meat? but I am among you as He that serveth” (Luke 22:27).

Success

“He came unto His own, and His own received Him not” (John 1:11).

“For neither did His brethren believe in Him” (John 7:5).

“He is despised and rejected of men ... He was despised, and we esteemed Him not” (Isaiah 53:3).

Ability

“Then answered Jesus and said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, The Son can do nothing of himself but what He seeth the Father do: for what things soever He doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise” (John 5:19).

“I can of Mine own self do nothing ...” (John 5:30a).

Self Will

“... I seek not Mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent Me” (John 5:30b).

Party (or Sect)

“And John answered and said, Master, we saw one casting out devils in thy name; and we forbad him, because he followeth not with us. And Jesus said unto him, Forbid him not: for he that is not against us is for us” (Luke 9:49-50).

Association

“And the Pharisees and scribes murmured, saying, This man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them” (Luke 15:2).

Christ, with all His contrasting attributes to pride, desires to live His life **through** the individual believer. Paul says to us,

“Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself; and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross” (Philippians 2:5-8).

“I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me” (Galatians 2:20).

“Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering; Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye. And above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness” (Colossians 3:12-14).

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