

WISDOM THROUGH THE SCRIPTURES

2Timothy 3:15 *And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.*

A major disadvantage that young people face is lack of experience. Experience is knowing how to respond to various situations thrown up by life, in a sensible way. How often have we heard adults say in a wistful tone, ‘If only I had known back then what I know now!’ We can all agree that wisdom that comes through life experience is a great asset in negotiating the twists and turns of life. It is for this reason that Solomon exhorts the reader to diligently acquire wisdom.

Proverbs 4:7 *Wisdom is the principal thing; therefore get wisdom: and with all thy getting get understanding.*

So how can a young person gain wisdom without having encountered challenges in life? The good news is that young people can acquire great wisdom by paying careful attention to the Word of God, as Paul reminds his son in the Gospel, Timothy. Jesus is called the ‘everlasting Father’ in the Scriptures (Isaiah 9:6). The advice of a father is motivated by a desire to protect the young from the consequences of bad decisions. So our heavenly Father says:

Proverbs 3:1 *My son, forget not my law; but let thine heart keep my commandments:*

Proverbs 3:2 *For length of days, and long life, and peace, shall they add to thee.*

Josiah was just eight years old when he became king. It appears that he developed an early habit of reading the Word of God and respecting the ministers of God, such as the high priest and scribes of the Law. There are two reasons we can assume this. The first is his response when the Word of God was found in the Temple and read before him.

2Kings 22:11 *And it came to pass, when the king had heard the words of the book of the law, that he rent his clothes.*

2Kings 22:12 *And the king commanded Hilkiah the priest, and Ahikam the son of Shaphan, and Achbor the son of Michaiah, and Shaphan the scribe, and Asahiah a servant of the king's, saying,*

2Kings 22:13 *Go ye, enquire of the LORD for me, and for the people, and for all Judah, concerning the words of this book that is found: for great is the wrath of the LORD that is kindled against us, because our fathers have not hearkened unto the words of this book, to do according unto all that which is written concerning us.*

Only a person who deeply loves the Word of God and has an intimate relationship with God can react in such a manner. His father, Amon, was a wicked king, but someone must have instilled a love for the God of David, his great ancestor, in the heart of the child Josiah. Perhaps it was his mother Jedidah; we don't know. The second is the great spiritual reforms that he undertook at the young age of twenty-six. Only an individual who was familiar with and loved the Word of God could embark on such comprehensive reforms that were pleasing in the sight of God. He fought against false religion, kept the Passover and many other acts of righteousness.

2Kings 23:25 *And like unto him was there no king before him, that turned to the LORD with all his heart, and with all his soul, and with all his might, according to all the law of Moses; neither after him arose there any like him.*

The Bible is filled with the life experiences of people who obeyed the Word of God and those who disobeyed. It invites the young person to meditate on these experiences and learn from them. The young person can compensate for lack of experience through the Word of God. The key reason for the success of Josiah was his habit of consulting the Lord (2Kings 22:13). There is always success waiting down the road for the young person who learns to inquire of the Lord in prayer and study of the Word, as did Josiah.

Consider Timothy, Paul's son in the Gospel. He had a mother and grandmother who loved the Lord and passed on their faith to this boy. Paul must have been truly impressed with his character and took him under his wings. See the great honor bestowed upon Timothy! Two books in the Bible are named after him. Even the great apostle Paul does not have a book in the Bible named after him. God truly loves those who love and obey his Word from childhood.