

WHAT IS PROSPERITY?

You can obtain great wealth and financial abundance without obtaining prosperity. For example, both a drug dealer and a prostitute can achieve wealth and financial abundance but they are not truly prosperous. On the other hand, there are those who keep the Ten Commandments and strive to live righteously but have not learned and applied certain financial principles and thus struggle financially and never achieve prosperity. Financial abundance is the result of work and the application of certain financial laws. One who is prosperous is financially independent and lives in accordance with God's laws. They are able to live the life God desires for them without relying on others financially.

Prosperity cannot be achieved by seeking money directly. As taught the Dali Lama, "Accumulation of wealth for the sake of wealth alone is self-defeating. Only in seeing one's work as a calling, a means to serve a higher purpose, can we find true fulfillment."¹ Those who are truly prosperous do not set their hearts upon riches. They love the Lord and recognize that all they have and are is a gift from Him. The prosperous use their financial resources to build the kingdom of God and care for His children by clothing the naked, feeding the hungry, and nourishing the sick.

THE PROSPERITY MODEL™

How effective would you be if you were driving to an unfamiliar location with an incorrect map? Chances are, if accurate directions were not obtained, the destination would never be reached. Many of us have been given bad directions to the destination of prosperity. If you desire to achieve prosperity, an accurate map of how to do so is essential. This book will address 24 myths (bad directions) that prevent prosperity. These myths are organized

THE PROSPERITY MODEL™

“And [the righteous] shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.” – Psalm 1:3

CONSEQUENCE =
MISERY

CONSEQUENCE =
PROSPERITY



in relation to The Prosperity Model™ (map). The Prosperity Model™ illustrates the principles of prosperity as a tree (see illustration). Here is a brief overview of the model's components:

The roots of the tree represent the principle, *Our Creator Gives Us All Good Things*. God is the supreme creator of the earth and the father of mankind. All we have and are is a gift from Him. Our power and growth comes by the hand of God, just as a tree receives its strength and nourishment from its roots.

The trunk of the tree represents the principle, *Liberty is Given To All Men by Our Creator*. The founding fathers asserted in The Declaration of Independence that all men are endowed by their Creator with the unalienable right of liberty. Just as the trunk of the tree is an outgrowth of the roots, so is liberty given to us by God. Liberty is the right and power to act, believe, or express oneself in a manner of one's own choosing.

The splitting of the trunk into two branches represents the principle of choice. As a result of our God given liberty, we have the power to make choices. The two main braches of the tree and the fruit of the tree represent the principle, *Consequences Are the Results of Our Choices*. Each time we make a choice we are either moving toward freedom and prosperity or bondage and misery. Just as a tree may produce good or bad fruit, so will our choices produce the good fruits of freedom and prosperity or the bad fruits of bondage and misery.

Liberty and freedom are often used as synonyms. In this book, they are used to illustrate very different concepts. Liberty is given to all men and is the right to choose. Freedom is a possible result of our choices. For example, two people are looking for a place to swim when they come upon a sign that reads, "Danger! Whirlpool – No Swimming Allowed." Both of these people have the liberty to choose whether to swim here or not. One swimmer chooses to enter the water and is pulled into the whirlpool. As a result of his choice, he is now in bondage to the whirlpool. The other person chooses not to enter the water, and as a result has the freedom to find another place to swim. Freedom results when we use our liberty correctly. Bondage results when we use our liberty incorrectly.

THE 6 CHOICES MODEL™



Does Your Bag Have Holes?™

Haggai 1:5-6

The fence surrounding the tree represents the principle, *Government is Created by the People to Protect Our God Given Rights*. Government is not to rule the people – the people are to rule the government. Government is illustrated as a protective fence with an armed soldier, separate from the tree, because the proper role of government is to protect mankind’s God given rights of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. The government is the protector, not the grantor, of our rights. The proper role of government is to protect the right to pursue prosperity, not to grant prosperity.

THE 6 CHOICES MODEL™

This book will also discuss 6 choices:

Choice 1:	Blame	or	Responsibility
Choice 2:	Pride	or	Humility
Choice 3:	Hypocrisy	or	Integrity
Choice 4:	Idleness	or	Industry
Choice 5:	Debt	or	Ownership
Choice 6:	Greed	or	Charity

The negative choices of blame, pride, hypocrisy, idleness, debt and greed will lead to bondage and misery. The positive choices of responsibility, humility, integrity, industry, ownership, and charity will lead to freedom and prosperity.

The 6 choices are illustrated by The Six Choices Model™ (See Illustration). The six negative choices are represented as holes in our bag of prosperity, as taught the prophet Haggai. “Now therefore thus saith the LORD of hosts; Consider your ways. Ye have sown much, and bring in little; ye eat, but ye have not enough; ye drink, but ye are not filled with drink; ye clothe you, but there is none warm; and he that earneth wages earneth wages to put it into a bag with holes.”²² Each portion of this scripture illustrates one of the 6 potential holes in the bag of prosperity.

Choice 1: Blame or Responsibility

Blame - "Consider Your Ways"

The person that is good at making excuses is rarely good at much else. Blame is a tool used by many to avoid taking responsibility. They are too busy considering the ways of others to consider their own ways.

Responsibility

If you kicked the person responsible for most of your troubles, you would not be able to sit for weeks. Everyone is responsible for his own actions. The story of your life is not written by what happens to you but by what you choose to make happen. The realization that you are responsible for your fate will produce a sense of power and drive that will lead you to make the choices resulting in the consequences you desire. Those who are responsible realize that living off others is a form of bondage; for if you take from a person his responsibility to care for himself, you also take from him the opportunity to be free.

Choice 2: Pride or Humility

Pride – "Ye Clothe You, but There is None Warm"

In the words of C. S. Lewis, "Pride gets no pleasure out of having something, only out of having more of it than the next man."³ When clothes are no longer used for warmth but are instead used to build social status or to have finer clothes than others, pride enters our hearts and lives.

Humility

Humility is the realization of our total dependence on God, and the recognition that all we have and are is a gift from Him. A person who is humble is generous, grateful and teachable. In the words of Rabindranath Tagore, "We come nearest to the great when we are great in humility."

Choice 3: Hypocrisy or Integrity

Hypocrisy – "Ye Drink, but Ye Are Not Filled With Drink"

Hypocrisy is the result of our outward and inward appearance not coinciding.

Haggai taught this with the metaphor of a person outwardly appearing to drink but not being filled with drink inwardly. The Lord condemned the Pharisee for hypocrisy saying, “Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity.”⁴

Integrity

Integrity is more than our beliefs aligning with our actions. Integrity is the adherence to Divine law. Surely Satan’s actions align with his beliefs, but he is not a person of integrity, because his actions are not in accordance with Divine law. Integrity is also keeping one’s word and commitments. The apostle James taught, “Let your ‘yes’ be ‘yes’ and your ‘no’ be ‘no.’”⁵

Choice 4: Idleness or Industry

Idleness – “Ye Have Sown Much, and Bring in Little”

Doing the wrong kind of work is a form of idleness. There are many who work hard but produce little. Also, there is a difference between being productive and being busy. Thus, some do sow much and bring in little.

Industry

Industry is the energetic devotion to a task or endeavor. Prosperity is the result of industry. Thomas Edison taught, “I never did anything worth doing by accident, nor did any of my inventions come by accident; they came by work.” In seeking to achieve prosperity, there will be failures along the way. Failure is a part of learning and growing. Benjamin Franklin taught, “The man who does things makes mistakes but he never makes the biggest mistake of all – doing nothing.”

Choice 5: Debt or Ownership

Debt – “Earneth Wages to Put it Into a Bag with Holes”

When you have debt, it is like putting your money into a bag with holes. The wages that are earned go to the payment of interest instead of toward ownership.

Ownership

Ownership is required to truly be free and prosperous. For example, if you don't own your house, you either pay rent and thus are bound to a landlord, or you have a mortgage and are bound to the bank to pay interest as rent on the money you have borrowed.

Choice 6: Greed or Charity

Greed – “Ye Eat, but Ye Have Not Enough”

Greed is an unsatisfiable desire. Therefore, no matter how much a greedy person has it will never be enough.

Charity

Charity is the highest, noblest, strongest kind of love. It will motivate us to care for the needs of our fellowman. Although it is contrary to human logic, there is an eternal truth that the more we give, the more we will have.

CONCLUSION

Prosperity and misery develop over time and are a result of our choices. Thus, there are varying levels of prosperity and misery. One who is prosperous is responsible, honest, humble, industrious, financially independent, and charitable. One who is miserable is irresponsible, proud, hypocritical, lazy, financially dependant and greedy.

1 Jon M. Huntsman, *Winners Never Cheat*, Upper Saddle River, NJ: Wharton School Publishing, 2005, p. 127

2 Haggai 1:5-6, King James Version

3 C.S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity*, New York: Simon & Schuster, 1996, p. 110

4 Matthew 23:28, King James Version

5 James 5:12, English Standard Version