

DANIEL DE OLIVEIRA

SECRETS OF SOLOMON

Wisdom & Success



*“Keep company with the wise
and you will become wise”*

Solomon

"Secrets of Solomon" is a book easy to read, full of quotations from ancient and contemporary sages: Publilius Syrus, Seneca, Marquês de Maricá, John C. Maxwell, Steven K. Scott, T. Harv Eker, among others. The book was inspired by Proverbs of Solomon, who is considered by many as the wisest and richest king of all time. After studying the life and work of King Solomon, and the reason for his great wisdom and wealth, the author gives to know the 12 secrets of Solomon to success. These secrets will transform your life as they did with many people throughout History, if you put them into practice. Learn from the wise and you will become one. As a result, you will experience prosperity in all areas of your life.

Title

Secrets of Solomon: Wisdom & Success

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"I do not have the habit of reading, but your book has awakened me in an inexplicable way!" Paula C.

"It's a book on my list of favorites... brought me an inner peace and a fabulous energy to succeed in life, but this time without haste, and with great humility." Nelson A.

"This wonderful book has created a stunning effect on my life." Nelson J.

"I was charmed with this reading, I confess that I have little wisdom, but after reading this book I feel a better person, or wiser." Luciana F.

WISDOM

*Wisdom is the secret key
for have riches and glory.
She has enormous prosperity
and a very lasting plenty!
She loves those who love her,
the one that seeks for her, finds.
Is Wisdom who brings us hope,
a future and a long life...
Her mission is help to thrive,
the knowledge gives power.
He who correction despises
has poverty, and disaster.
You want to better your life,
you want invest in tomorrow?
You only have to seek Wisdom,
and simply, success will follow.*

Daniel de Oliveira
(in "Poetics IV")

INTRODUCTION

"If you live according to nature,
you will never be poor;
If you live according to opinion,
you will never be rich."

Epicurus

What is the secret of one of the most powerful men who ever lived?

Solomon, son of King David, was the third king of Israel and lived during the tenth century BC. He became famous because of his great wisdom and wealth, higher than any other king on earth who lived before and after him. His reign was long (about 40 years), full of peace and prosperity. And even without war, he received the voluntary tribute of all neighboring kingdoms (according to some chronologies, 971-931 BC).

Today, we studied the route and the history of all those who achieve success, regardless of their area of expertise. And we can learn about their methods and strategies that led them to achieve success. However, I consider fundamental: study the life and work of one of the most successful men ever.

Harv Eker in his book "Secrets of the Millionaire Mind" reveals that when he was in a particularly difficult time, received the following advice that changed his life: "If you thought the way rich people do and did what rich people do, do you believe you could become rich too? All you have to do is copy how rich people think".

Well, I believe that if we think and act like Solomon, we will experience great results. Because he was not only rich, but the richest of all! So, it was established as a great example for us. However, I warn you since now: the wealth that Solomon offers goes far beyond material wealth. It has to do with prosperity in every way of life.

All you will find in this book is not original. In fact, if you have any hope of finding some "novelty", regret to inform you but will be disappointed. As Jim Rohn said: "Everything you need for your better future and success has already been written".

Personally, I have no merit by any statement in this book. Everything I learned was through others. And even the statements of Solomon, are not unique. They were taught by many sages throughout History.

This proves precisely the universality and truth of these principles. Many things change from generation to generation but in essence, the human being remains the same. So it makes sense, learn from those who have gone

before us. "Yet, they are not secrets but truths which every man must first learn and then follow" (George S. Clason).

More than a book to be read, "Secrets of Solomon" is a manual to reflect and digest slowly. Each section functions as a small daily meditation. Where, you will learn truths that can change your life, if you put them into practice. Welcome to this journey.

Daniel de Oliveira

RICHERS OF SOLOMON

THE RICHER AND WISER MAN

"King Solomon was richer and wiser than any other king"

"Solomon was wiser than the wise men of the East
or the wise men of Egypt.

He was the wisest of all men"

I Kings 10:23, 4:30-31

"Even the heartiest skeptic must admit what wise men and kings and queens the world over once acknowledged - that Solomon was the wisest man who ever lived" (Steven K. Scott). In human History, the word "Wisdom" will always be associated with the name "Solomon". It is impossible to disassociate both. Probably, Solomon is the father of all personal development literature. So it is essential for us: return to the source.

The fact that Solomon was very rich and also very wise, can lead us to question whether there is any relationship between wealth and wisdom? Does the wisdom and wealth are associated? Does wisdom is the natural path to wealth? If we are wiser, richer we will be?

Solomon thought so. He said there was a close relationship between true wisdom and true wealth. However, he warns that it is possible to be "rich" without being wise. But for anyone who becomes wise, wealth will be a natural consequence.

The prosperity that Solomon promises to those who follow the path of wisdom, involves all aspects of life: spiritual, emotional, intellectual, physical, family, professional, social and material. According to the dictionary, "prosperity" means "quality or state that is prosperous, happiness, progress, wealth". This is the fate of those who follow the wisdom, or in the words of Steven K. Scott: "True success is a natural byproduct of Solomon's wisdom".

And for our benefit, Solomon wrote a real treaty of wisdom for all those who want to live a prosperous life in all areas: the Book of Proverbs. A book that is part of the Bible, the best-selling book of all time! "A vast amount of leadership wisdom lies within the 31 chapters of Proverbs", contains "excellent principles for guiding one's life" (John C. Maxwell). And who better than the wisest man in the world to be our mentor?

LEARNING FROM SOLOMON

"Keep company with the wise and you will become wise."

Proverbs 13:20

If you absorb the truths in this book, and put into practice in your day-to-day, you will walk toward success. Listen to what it says John C. Maxwell, the leading expert in today's leadership: "Embrace the disciplines and the character that Solomon suggests, and you will be on your way to transforming your leadership".

Your real focus should not be to reach the "goal", but take pleasure in walking. If you concentrate on practice wisdom, success will be just a consequence. But if you're "obsessed" with success, will seek "shortcuts" to reach "faster" and will hurt yourself. In fact, there are no "shortcuts" to the true, full and lasting success. The only feasible and safe way, is what Solomon calls "way of wisdom". Focus on walking this path, and you will reap the good fruits of that. Deviate from this path, and the fruit will be bitter.

The reality is that all problems are wisdom problems. If you seek wisdom in all things, you will find the solution to all problems. And not just today, people look for the solution of their problems. In the time of Solomon, all the people came to be with him to learn to be successful. And they became prosperous. Do the same, learning from Solomon, and you will prosper.

GOLD OR WISDOM?

"And the whole world wanted to come and listen to the wisdom that God had given him.

Everyone who came brought him a gift:
articles of silver and gold,
robes, weapons, spices, horses, and mules.

This continued year after year."

I Kings 10:24-25

In this passage, you may notice the following principle: The more wisdom you have, the more wisdom you can share. And the more wisdom you share, the more wisdom you may have. In fact it's a cycle: If you sow wisdom - in yourself or in others - more wisdom you will get.

We can also observe the relationship between wisdom and wealth of Solomon. People were not only happy to hear the wisdom of Solomon, but they were also grateful: Expressing its deep appreciation through valuable offers, including gold. We can see the value of wisdom in people's lives: they exchanged gold for wisdom!

George S. Clason, in the book "The Richest Man in Babylon", asks the question: "A bag heavy with gold or a clay tablet carved with words of wisdom; if thou hadst thy choice, which wouldst thou choose?" Do you know the

answer of most people? "Ignore the wisdom and waste the gold. On the morrow they wail because they have no more gold" (George S. Clason).

What good would, if we understood the importance of wisdom, as in Solomon's time. Wisdom can transform our lives. In fact, wisdom is far more valuable than gold.

A HIDDEN TREASURE

"Yes, beg for knowledge; plead for insight. Look for it as hard as you would for silver or some hidden treasure."

Proverbs 2:3-4

Most of us have had this childish dream: Find a hidden treasure! Find something valuable that transform our lives! Something to fill our existence of sense! Something to fill our empty... Wisdom is this treasure that speaks Solomon. We need to take a real journey in search of this treasure!

Solomon has found this treasure, and wants to give us clues to get there. We can consider the book "Proverbs of Solomon" as a treasure map! Dear reader, let yourself be guided by Solomon while reading this book. Let him help you find the real treasure of your life! But do not forget: "Never has there been a map, however carefully executed to detail and scale, which carried its owner over even one inch

of ground" (Og Mandino). Solomon only shows us the way, but we who have to walk! "Whatever aid I give thee will be as a grain of sand compared to the mountains you must move for yourself" (Og Mandino).

BASE OF WEALTH

"Every year King Solomon received
over twenty-five tons of gold,
in addition to the taxes paid by merchants,
the profits from trade, and tribute paid by the Arabian kings
and the governors of the Israelite districts."

I Kings 10:14-15

The wealth of Solomon was really huge! "In terms of wealth, some have suggested that in today's dollars, he may well have been a trillionaire" (Steven K. Scott). How could a king be as rich and prosperous without war or violence? While many today are "rich" because of corruption, Solomon built all his great prosperity based on justice! According to him, this is the only solid foundation.

By analyzing its Manual of Success (Book of Proverbs), we see that their secrets have nothing to do with "methods or techniques" to achieve wealth, but are mainly based on the character. "It is a book about improving the

way we think and therefore act" (John C. Maxwell). It is quite different from the current mentality.

No wonder today, in the age of information (in 21 century AD), that human beings experience great crises at all levels, including in financial terms (despite all the available knowledge). Today we are better educated, and we have more resources than people had in Solomon's time. However, these people had more prosperity. Certainly they have something to teach us. Today we seek to improve "methods", Solomon sought to improve people! The Solomon's methods have been tested and proven by experience.

TRUE WEALTH

"During his reign silver and gold became
as common in Jerusalem as stone,
and cedar was as plentiful
as ordinary sycamore in the foothills of Judah."

II Chronicles 1:15

How many stones you have stored in your home? You do not value the stones? Well, in Solomon's time, silver and gold were as common as stones! Can you even imagine this scenario? Would you like to live in those golden days?

Solomon says it is possible to live those times, at any time or place!

According to him, the problem is not the people or the circumstances or place where we live, the problem is within us. And this problem is a problem of wisdom. "You must change is the soul, not climate... Walking from one side to the other will not help you because you walk always with yourself" (Seneca). I remember that once I tried to change the world, now I try to change myself. Everything changes when we change!

Do you want to change the world around you? Start with yourself. It is inside, where it all begins. You know when our life will improve? When we improve! "The only way things are going to change for me is when I change" (Jim Rohn). In fact, all our outer world is simply a reflection of our inner. "We must travel on the inside before we can travel on the outside, because the journey of growth and success is first an internal one" (John C. Maxwell). Note that all the prosperous reign of Solomon was just a mirror of himself.

PROSPERITY FOR ALL

"The people of Judah and Israel
were as numerous as the grains of sand on the seashore;
they ate and drank, and were happy."

I Kings 4:20

It pleases me the fact that Solomon was not only rich, but also he made rich all the people around him. People lived happily in his reign, and had all things in abundance! So were so numerous "as the grains of sand on the seashore". They had no need to migrate to improve their lives. I believe that many foreigners emigrated from their country, to live in the country of Solomon. Because in Israel, they were prosperous and happy!

How many are concerned today, to enrich others? By nature, we tend to be selfish. We tend to think only in our happiness and well-being. However, our prosperity increases as we help others prosper. Our happiness also increases as we help others to be happy.

So, we should not only have the purpose to thrive and be happy. Let us follow the example of Solomon, enrich and make other people happy! This will be the greatest joy of our life.

THE WAY OF WISDOM

"Solomon's kingdom included all the nations from the Euphrates River to Philistia and the Egyptian border. They paid him taxes and were subject to him all his life."

I Kings 4:21

Isn't it strange, he dominated other kingdoms but not by force? Throughout History, whenever a king wanted to extend his kingdom would have to do it through wars. However, Solomon did it through wisdom! He claimed that a wise could conquer a city of heroes! (Proverbs 21:22).

You may think: "I'm no king like Solomon, therefore, I can't be successful like him". However, it is good to remember that throughout History, many had the opportunity to reign, and destroyed their reigns. The important thing is not where you are, but where you are going.

Solomon began as a king, but greatly improved his kingdom and the prosperity of its inhabitants. No matter where you are: If you follow the path of wisdom, you will grow and will extend your influence. And you will improve not only your life, but also of all those around you!

SECRET 1

OBSTACLE OF WEALTH

1.1 THE MAIN ENEMY

"The greater the hurry, the farther the distance."

Seneca

Who doesn't like to be successful? Having all their needs met, and live in abundance? Who doesn't like to contribute to a better world, and help those in need? It would be almost an "hypocrisy" a person doesn't answer yes to these questions.

In fact, there is a natural desire in man for plenty. Human beings aren't born to live in poverty (whether material, intellectual, emotional, or spiritual). Therefore, we seek to combat poverty in all possible ways, either through thoughts or actions. It is a constant struggle, and can become even an obsession. However, we need to keep in mind that often it is precisely this "obsession" that prevents us to thrive. And the larger the obsession, the greater the

obstacle. "If you have too much hurry, you will harm yourself" (Tosi 1581).

Hurry means "anguish, anxiety, urgency, speed, difficulty" (Dictionary). That is, a person with too much "hurry" feels "anguish" because of a problem, and have "anxiety" and "urgency" to find the solution, therefore acts with great "speed", but in the end, he'll find only a bigger "difficulty"!

1.2 WRONG FOCUS

"Be wise enough not to wear yourself out trying to get rich.

Your money can be gone in a flash,
as if it had grown wings and flown away like an eagle."

Proverbs 23:4-5

Wealth must be a consequence and not an obsession. You might have noticed: When we are obsessed with something, it seems more difficult to achieve it. And on the other hand, there are things we do not aspire, and come to us. "How many things happen to us and we do not expect! And how many things we hope and never happen!" (Seneca).

How Come? There seems to be a law that says: When you covet something, it runs away from you. And when you despise something, it will reach you. We can have

this certainty: When we expect something, we will be disappointed; but when we do not expect, we will be surprised! This looks amazing: How often, we hear phrases like "Wanting is power" or "Who waits, always achieve". But how many times it happens that "He who hopes, despairs"!

This teaching of Solomon isn't very easy to explain, but the truth is that always works. It's something so intangible and real at the same time! You want to be successful? So please, do not run after it. "Ambition makes us go after the coveted goods and lose the goods we possess" (Marquês de Maricá).

The ambition puts our happiness in the future, and says: "Tomorrow, you will be happy". And the next day, says again: "Tomorrow, you will be happy"... We should never postpone our happiness! Remember: The secret of happiness is within us. Happiness is the ability to enjoy every moment, and the only time we can be happy is now! Today is the best day of our lives: let us be thankful on this day. Gratitude is a door to happiness.

If the ambition of being rich makes people become rich, everyone would be rich. Have you noticed how many millions and millions of people run after riches every week playing in games of chance? The truth is that the riches flee! Someone will say: "If others make money, why not me?", But is this the best way? "Everyone wants to win a lottery.

Everyone wants to get rich with as little effort as possible. But... For every winner, there are millions of losers" (Steven K. Scott).

There will be a path with higher probability of success than to be one among millions? We should not lay eyes on the money. Money loves those who reject him, and despises those who love him. Remember the famous phrase of Paul: "The love of money is the root of all evil" (1 Timothy 6:10). The love of money will only bring harm to your life. Amazingly, "the shortest path to wealth is contempt of wealth" (Seneca). If you despise the riches, wealth will reach you!

1.3 THE WAY TO POVERTY

"Selfish people are in such a hurry to get rich that they do not know when poverty is about to strike."

Proverbs 28:22

How many people have greed to enrich? However, greed can only achieve poverty! "If your thoughts and emotions are focused on getting rich, then you will become infected by greed" (Steven K. Scott).

The greedy man is obsessed by being rich, nor realizes that wealth flees. In fact, thinking about wealth, he walks into poverty! "Solomon clearly teaches us not to set

our focus on getting rich. Doing so is the quickest way to go broke" (Steven K. Scott).

The ambition and greed are the fastest paths to poverty. Who wants truly enrich, must learn to shed off all the ambition and greed. Are true traps for misery! "The twin killers of success are impatience and greed" (Jim Rohn).

Be smart, Solomon knew very well what he was talking about. It is estimated that he was actually the richest man that ever lived on Earth. Certainly, he has great secrets to share with us.

1.4 ILLUSION OF RICHES

"When the wicked die, their hope dies with them.

Confidence placed in riches comes to nothing."

Proverbs 11:7

For many, the riches are but an illusion. Not worth seeking external wealth, if our interior is miserable. What profit hath a bad man in being rich? Does his wealth will eliminate evil?

No. On the contrary, it may even harm him. The wealth in the hands of a bad person, only serve to increase their wickedness. "Money can't make you something you already are. If you're bad, the money will give you the

opportunity to be worse... If you are generous, more money will simply allow you to be more generous" (T. Harv Eker).

Thus, the riches are like "powerful tools" that can be used for the benefit or detriment of a person. Hence the wealth should never be a target, but only a means to an end. "Your true possessions are only in your interior" (Seneca).

Seek the inner riches, and outer wealth will become just a consequence. Do not put "the cart before the horse", will not work. If you do, the wealth will be just an illusion, a mirage along the way. You'll never reach the riches. And if that happens, the wealth will not satisfy you, and may even harm you.

1.5 LOYALTY OR HURRY?

"Honest people will lead a full, happy life.

But if you are in a hurry to get rich,
you are going to be punished."

Proverbs 28:20

To Solomon, the path to the blessings had a name: Honesty (or Loyalty, in other translations). You've heard the expression: "If you are faithful in little, much will be given to you". It's true, Solomon had this awareness: Being faithful is the path to the blessings.

But also, we have another way: Hurry. For those who don't want to be faithful, this path is the alternative. Actually it is not a way, is a shortcut. And you know, "who walks by shortcuts, gets into foul-ups"! "The longest distance between two points is a shortcut" (John C. Maxwell). "Rushing too much, the traveler moves less" (Latin proverb).

Solomon says there are punishments for those walking through the "shortcut" called hurry. That is, there are pitfalls, there are holes, there are terrible and dangerous cliffs. It is a horrible movie... "And, in the end, all die"!

Fidelity is a process, the rush is a moment. Do you want to base your success on luck or work? If Solomon wanted to make poetry with this teaching, would probably say:

"To any successful work,
there is no short path.
But if you are looking for luck,
you will find only death."

1.6 LITTLE BY LITTLE

"The more easily you get your wealth,
the sooner you will lose it.
The harder it is to earn, the more you will have."

Proverbs 13:11

You see here the process described by Solomon for lasting wealth: Not easily (all at once), but hardly (little by little). The popular proverb says: "Grain by grain, the hen fills her belly". Consistent wealth should be achieved gradually and not all at once.

A clear example of this, are the people who make millions in the lottery: "Research has shown again and again that regardless of the size of their winnings, most lottery winners eventually return to their original financial state, the amount they can comfortably handle" (T. Harv Eker).

All that is gained fast, is lost quickly. "It is hard to keep that which has not been obtained through personal development" (Jim Rohn). On the other hand, all that is difficult to win, is also difficult to be lost. Solomon says that wealth gained hastily will decrease. Quickly came, quickly was. "Wealth that comes quickly goeth the same way. Wealth that stayeth to give enjoyment and satisfaction to its owner comes gradually, because it is a child born of knowledge and persistent purpose" (George S. Clason).

I believe that is not the "prosperity-ninja" we desire, that suddenly appears and disappears, and leaves us completely ruined... So we need to learn to build our wealth slowly and completely forget the "luck". Once, my father

told a friend: "Still, having money is power". To which the friend replied: "No. There is a greater power than having money... is the power to keep it"! George S. Clason warns: "Gold, indeed, clingeth to the cautious owner, even as it flees the careless owner".

Jim Rohn says: "I remember saying to my mentor, 'If I had more money, I would have a better plan.' He quickly responded, 'I would suggest that if you had a better plan, you would have more money.' You see, it's not the amount that counts; it's the plan that counts". What is your plan? It has no? Remember that "the habit of managing your money is more important than the amount. Until you show you can handle what you've got, you won't get any more!" (T. Harv Eker).

Learn from George S. Clason, the master plan to enrich on a consistent basis: "A part of all you earn is yours to keep. It should be not less than a tenth no matter how little you earn. It can be as much more as you can afford. Pay yourself first... Wealth, like a tree, grows from a tiny seed. The first copper you save is the seed from which your tree of wealth shall grow".

Start by paying yourself 10% of all that you receive (regardless of all your expenses and personal obligations, family, religious or social, etc). True wealth begins with a simple seed. If you separate only 10% of everything you earn, that seed will grow to become a big tree where you

can take shelter under her shadow, and eating their fruit...
"The economy with the work is a precious gold mine"
(Marquês de Maricá).

1.7 CAUTION WITH ENTHUSIASM

"Enthusiasm without knowledge is not good;
impatience will get you into trouble."

Proverbs 19:2

Do you want to stumble? It's just you hurry. However, the fall can be bad. It can hurt, destroy, and until kill... Do not fall into this trap. What good is it to have enthusiasm but no knowledge? Be very careful. Nowadays, there are many people promising easy wealth, but that only serves to make people stumble... "Gold flees the man who would force it to impossible earnings or who followeth the alluring advice of tricksters and schemers or who trusts it to his own inexperience and romantic desires in investment" (George S. Clason).

Do not let the gold glitter blind your eyes. "Those who are blinded by ambition still see worse than the blind by birth" (Marquês de Maricá). Let us flee from any kind of "fever" for money! "Be not misled by thine own romantic desires to make wealth rapidly... be not swayed by the fantastic plans of impractical men who think they see ways

to force thy gold to make earnings unusually large" (George S. Clason).

We can not delude ourselves. You can not build a house without knowledge... it is likely that the house will fall and hurt its inhabitants! Everything in this life is built with knowledge. Enthusiasm is marvelous but, without knowledge, can be disastrous. "Better a little caution than a great regret" (George S. Clason). So Solomon said: "Keep company with the wise and you will become wise". That is, we must learn the knowledge, we must build our lives on knowledge, and knowledge will be a firm and unshakable foundation.

1.8 VERY FAST

"The more easily you get your wealth,
the less good it will do you."

Proverbs 20:21

We should not want things quickly, or enrich suddenly. This would be detrimental and would not give prosperity to the end, and the worst: It would lead to misery. I believe in continuous work, not in sudden improvement. All the wealth built gradually will last. But the wealth that arises suddenly, suddenly end. "I must practice the art of patience for nature acts never in haste" (Og Mandino).

Let us not deceive ourselves, waiting for that one day the luck will knock on the door... because that day will not come. And if that day comes will not be a gift but a loan with high interest! "Do not ask a loan, except to yourself!" (Cato in Moral Letters to Lucilius 119:2).

Let us walk the way of faithfulness and not haste, work and not shortcut. Maybe we can think: "But if not for luck, I never get there". But this is a mistake. If others have achieved, why can not we also reach? Do they have something more than us?

Yes, but what they have, we can also have. "Success is a learnable skill. You can learn to succeed at anything" (T. Harv Eker). And that is precisely what Solomon wants to teach us. "That which one man knows can be taught to others" (George S. Clason). If we practice the teachings of Solomon, we will experience the same success!

1.9 LESSONS OF WISDOM

- 1- Do not run after riches.
- 2- Don't have the ambition of wealth, nor lay your eyes on the money.
- 3- Reject the ambition and greed.
- 4- Never procrastinate your happiness, but be thankful and happy today.
- 5- Search the inner riches, and be faithful in little things.

- 6- Build your wealth slowly, consistently and gradually.
- 7- Save 10% to yourself, of all the money you earn, regardless of your obligations.
- 8- Run away from all kinds of "fever" to the money and getting rich quick.
- 9- Build your life based on knowledge.

SECRET 2

THE BASIS FOR SUCCESS

2.1 THE IMPORTANCE OF A BASE

"Riches and honors without justice
are to me as fleeting clouds."

Confucius

What are the foundations of your life? What is your base of support? What allows you to live confidently? Who do you trust? Everyone is building something, and everything is done on a base. This base is that will give support to everything else. If the base falls, all that was built also falls. Hence the importance of the foundations in our lives. Any success without firm foundations, will fall. If we wish to be successful people, we need to pay close attention at the base. It is the most important.

The success we have achieved, should be compared to the tip of an iceberg. When one observes the tip of an iceberg, can not imagine the greatness of the iceberg under water. The same happens with the trees, they have huge

roots. And the greater a base, safer is the top. If you want to get to the "top", be sure to have a firm and solid foundation. "Ability may get you to the top, but it takes character to keep you there. We cannot rise above the limitations of our character" (John C. Maxwell).

The higher we climb, the greater is the fall. We need to value what gives support to our lives. Many people don't want to waste time with the base. They want to appear in the spotlight and aspire to instant success. But when a person achieves success in this way, the results can be disastrous. "The larger the outward privilege, the larger the inward character must be" (John C. Maxwell).

When we observe the construction of a house, which takes longer to be built? The foundations. But after the house was finished, we can see the foundations? No, the foundations are not seen, but they are there to ensure the sustainability of the house. Likewise, the foundation of our life guarantee the sustainability of our success.

2.2 PRACTICE GOOD DEEDS

"Kings cannot tolerate evil,
because justice is what makes a government strong."

Proverbs 16:12

Solomon was king, and was building the kingdom of Israel. Throughout his reign, both Solomon and all the people of Israel experienced an abundant prosperity. These times are considered the golden age of Israel. But why did this happen? On what foundation, Solomon built his kingdom? Justice was the basis for all the reign of Solomon. He said: "Justice is what makes a government strong".

Justice means "under the law, the act of giving to each what rightfully belongs, righteousness, equality, impartiality, honesty" (Dictionary). Being fair is to respect the rights of others with equality and impartiality. "Ensures love for your parents, indulgence to family, loyalty to friends, justice for all" (DM 30).

All the reign of Solomon was firm on justice. For him it was intolerable a king do evil because it meant the ruin of a kingdom. The evil deeds are not firm basis for anyone. When a person wants to achieve success through evil deeds, is doomed from the start. It will always be an illusion, someone wanting to achieve a good end through wrong means.

What gives sustainability and durability to any project is the practice of justice. "The basis for any leadership is the truth, integrity and justice" (John C. Maxwell in "Maxwell Leadership Bible"). Justice is the most solid foundation that exists, and there is nothing that makes overthrow this basis.

2.3 THE BASIS FOR PROSPERITY

"When the king is concerned with justice,
the nation will be strong,
but when he is only concerned with money,
he will ruin his country."

Proverbs 29:4

He that doeth righteousness ensures prosperity, but he who commits injustice ensures ruin. It is impossible to think of lasting prosperity without justice. It does not exist. "Only good character gives lasting success with people" (John C. Maxwell).

The lack of justice means loss of prosperity. It is nonsense when someone "in the name of prosperity" commits injustice. This will not bring prosperity, but only ruin.

How does that happen? It just happens. Not everything in life is: $1 + 1 = 2$. Prosperity + Injustice \neq Unjust Prosperity. The correct formula would be: Prosperity + Injustice = Ruin. This is what says, the leading Expert in Mathematics of Prosperity.

2.4 JUSTICE OR POVERTY

"Righteousness makes a nation great;
sin is a disgrace to any nation."

Proverbs 14:34

Justice leads to greatness. Injustice leads to poverty. What will make us great? Justice, but sin makes us poor. "This means that the rich are more righteous than the poor?" Not at all! We cannot judge anyone. But I have one certainty: Justice enriches the "rich" and "poor", but injustice impoverishes them.

We wish a more prosperous world? So we need to build a more just world. I have no doubt that injustice is a major cause of poverty. The more fair is our life, more durable will be our prosperity.

But the common thought is exactly the opposite. What is not surprising, because if the world is as it is, is for some reason. "If you want to amend your errors, you must begin by amending your philosophy" (Jim Rohn). We need to change our mind! If we want a different destination, we need to change path. You cannot do the same things, and expect different results! As said Albert Einstein, this is insanity.

This is why Solomon said: "Be careful how you think; your life is shaped by your thoughts" (Proverbs 4:23). Your mentality will determine your reality. He who follows the majority, will have a common result. Discard the

common thought to achieve uncommon results. If our present is different from our past, our future will be different from our present.

However, as also taught the roman philosopher Seneca: "Above all, each of us must be convinced that we have to be fair without seeking reward... We should not think what will be the prize of a righteous act; the highest award is the righteous act be practiced".

2.5 DO NOT TRUST IN RICHES

"Those who depend on their wealth
will fall like the leaves of autumn,
but the righteous will prosper like the leaves of summer."

Proverbs 11:28

Riches give much confidence to those who have them. But in reality, the wealth should not serve as a confidence to anyone. Riches are not a reliable basis to ensure prosperity to the end.

What happens to someone who trusts in his riches? Will fall. Riches are not the basis, but the consequence. When a person trusts in riches, is like someone who trusts in a house without a foundation. Certainly, this prosperity will not last long.

But what happens when someone builds success based on justice? This person is always growing. Solomon makes the comparison with a tree: The roots represent justice, and the tree growth is the growth of prosperity.

No matter if a tree is too large: When you cut the roots, the tree will fall and the fruit will cease. So too, no matter if a person is very successful: When cease justice, the person will fall and the wealth will cease.

2.6 JUSTICE OR FAILURE

"Righteous people will always have security,
but the wicked will not survive in the land."

Proverbs 10:30

The righteous man will succeed. Therefore, Albert Einstein said: "Try not to become a man of success, but rather try to become a man of value. Success is consequence". But how to be a person of worth, good and fair? "A big part of kindness consists in wanting to be good" (Seneca). It all starts with a wish, a small "seed" that grows as we nourish this desire daily.

What is the consequence? A righteous person will always have security, because justice is a firm foundation that can not be shaken. But what will happen to those who are evil and unjust? Will not remain. His prosperity (if any)

is about to end. "Competency cannot substitute for lack of character" (John C. Maxwell).

In Portuguese, the word "failure" (fracasso) comes from the word "weak" (fraco) from which derives the word "weakness" (fraqueza). Why something is weak? Because it has no force. What is the consequence? The fall. On the other hand we have the word "success", from which derives the word "succession". It has to do with something solid, permanent and successive. What is the secret to our prosperity not fall but remain continuously and grow up? The secret is the practice of justice. Success is just a consequence.

2.7 JUSTICE OR UNHAPPINESS

"Righteous people keep their wealth,
but the wicked lose theirs when hard times come."

Proverbs 15:6

What we found in the life of the righteous? Wealth. But the common thought rarely associates a righteous person to a rich person. How Come? What happens is this: The human being is considered himself naturally "fair". In fact, we built a false idea of ourselves. Even a criminal may think it's a person "fair". Now imagine what ordinary people think?

The point is: We are fair for real? Or we have a partial view of us? How many times, we make true injustices and we think: "This has nothing wrong". Simply, we do something wrong and wash our hands like it was nothing. But let us not forget: "Character counts, inward purity impacts outward profession" (John C. Maxwell).

What will make us righteous people is not to believe that we are! We can fool ourselves, but it will be just that. Let us make the following question: "Do I lead an honest life, unashamed of who I am when no one is looking?" (John C. Maxwell).

Solomon says that what is gained by dishonesty will result in unhappiness. One good thing when it is achieved wrongly becomes a bad thing. "In their quest to accelerate their wealth, people become willing to do that which is unethical, immoral, or illegal to acquire more" (Steven K. Scott). There are many wrong ways to enrich: lies, corruption, lawlessness, theft, etc. There are people who discourage enrichment as a way to avoid these "temptations". And somehow, it is a prudent advice.

However, just as there are the wrong methods, there are also the correct methods (such as the methods taught by Solomon). The wrong methods seem the easiest and fastest methods. But the correct methods are the best, and the ones that are long lasting. It is better to have an honest wage albeit small, than to have great income with injustice.

Because stolen money is cursed, and will damage its possessor. You know what makes us happy? It is not wealth, is justice.

2.8 JOY OF JUSTICE

"The righteous have enough to eat,
but the wicked are always hungry."

Proverbs 13:25

The practice of justice will bring true fulfillment to our lives. But all the evil will only result in frustration. The evil is insatiable. And who is bad, live for ever unsatisfied. As much as try to take advantage of things, will have no pleasure. This is the curse of the evil: Unhappiness.

Look for making the right choices and you will be a satisfied and happy person. "We have no control over a lot of things in life. We don't get to choose our parents. We don't select the location or circumstances of our birth and upbringing. We don't get to pick our talents or IQ. But we do choose our character. In fact, we create it every time we make choices" (John C. Maxwell).

2.9 FEAR OR DESIRE

"The righteous get what they want,

but the wicked will get what they fear most."

Proverbs 10:24

The evil is motivated by fear, but justice is motivated by desire. Evil men fear, but the righteous men desire. What evil men fear, will end up happening to them. Evil men attract evil. But the righteous men attract good things. All that a righteous person wants, more sooner or later, will end up receiving.

If you are a righteous person, and simply say or think: "Oh, how I wish I had that". Your wish will be granted (sometimes even sooner than you think).

But a person with malice needs to be very careful. Because when the bad person is afraid of something, most likely, will happen. Just the person speaks or thinks in evil, and evil arises. But with the just does not happen like that.

We are like magnets: We attract things similar to us. If we are good, we attract good things. But if we are bad, we attract bad things. Remember: "When you are complaining, you become a living, breathing "crap magnet"... What you focus on expands" (T. Harv Eker). Therefore, we should pay attention to what we are. Our focus should be only in what is good. "Success is not to be pursued; it is to be attracted by the person you become... Unless you change what you are, you will always have what you've got!" (Jim Rohn).

2.10 BLESSINGS OR VIOLENCE

"Good people will receive blessings.

The words of the wicked hide a violent nature."

Proverbs 10:6

I do not think we can categorize ourselves: 100% fair or 100% bad. I believe that we always have a mixture of both. The key is to weigh the balance to the correct side. That is, we must do justice and avoid all kinds of evil.

Solomon states that "Good people will receive blessings" (in Portuguese translation BPT09 says: "rains of blessings"). Can you imagine that? Wherever you go, rains of blessings to fall on you? How wonderful, I wish that for my life and yours. It will be a pleasure and a continuous happiness.

And what can be expected from evil? Oh, constant violence! Violence dwells within the bad man (BPT09 "The bad man lodges itself violence"). And the violence comes to stay with its terrible consequences. When violence will leave the life of a bad person? Only when the person leaves the evil. Violence and evil always live together, are "married" forever. "Why delude ourselves? Our evil does not come from the outside, is within us and rooted in our guts" (Seneca).

2.11 GUARANTEED REWARD

"Wicked people do not really gain anything, but if you do what is right, you are certain to be rewarded."

Proverbs 11:18

The wealth of the wicked man, is quite misleading, it's just an illusion. But for those who propagate justice, there will be always a sure reward. The evil will be punished, but the righteous will be rewarded. Who will make this judgment? It is life itself, its laws are infallible and immutable.

On this planet called Earth, he who sows righteousness will reap wealth. The one who sows injustice will reap poverty. "Occasionally the innocent are punished (who denies it?), but it is more common that the guilty are punished" (Seneca) .The wicked man can have some kind of temporary pleasure, but will eventually have the sentence. The righteous man may have some sort of temporary suffering, but will eventually have the reward. It is a sure thing, and that does not fail. "Today's sadness carry the seed of tomorrow's joy" (Og Mandino).

2.12 CONTINUOUS PROSPERITY

"Good people will have wealth
to leave to their grandchildren,
but the wealth of sinners will go to the righteous."

Proverbs 13:22

The prosperity of the righteous is constant, and will remain. But the prosperity of the wicked is fleeting and inevitably will come out of their hands. The fortune of the good man goes to whom? To their grandchildren. But the wealth of the sinner will go to whom? It will not be to their heirs, but to the righteous. It's a matter of time.

Prosperity belongs to the righteous. They are the rightful owners. The righteous are the basis of all prosperity. The prosperity is like a tree with its good fruit, and its roots are justice. "If you want to change the fruits, you will first have to change the roots" (T. Harv Eker). Decide build your life based on justice, and then you will grow and bear fruit. Stay connected to the "roots" of justice, and your prosperity will never cease.

2.13 LESSONS OF WISDOM

- 1- Build your life in the solid foundation of justice.
- 2- Respect the rights of others with equality and impartiality.
- 3- Contribute to a fairer world.

- 4- Wish to be a righteous person, and feed this desire on a daily basis.
- 5- Live honestly, without being ashamed of you, even when no one is watching.
- 6- Do not enrich incorrectly: through lies, corruption, illegality or theft...
- 7- Make fair decisions.
- 8- Be motivated by the desire and not by fear, and focus on what is good.
- 9- Practice and propagate justice, and avoid all kinds of evil.

SECRET 3

THE CAUSE OF FAILURE

3.1 GOOD AND EVIL

"Seven Social Sins: Politics without principles.
Wealth without work. Pleasure without conscience.
Knowledge without character. Commerce without morality.
Science without humanity. Worship without sacrifice."

Mahatma Gandhi

What is the basis for success? According to Solomon, the only solid basis for all success is justice. Anything else may result in damage. We must not deceive ourselves. The ends do not justify the means. "Compromise on your methods, but never on your convictions or principles" (John C. Maxwell). Although a particular purpose seems fair, the means chosen to achieve it must also be fair. The origin of things determines the final. "Even the most noble projects fail when the leadership is immoral" (John C. Maxwell).

There is a common thought that says: "Evil pays off sometimes". However, this is only an illusion. All unrighteousness can provide some pleasure, but in the end will result in damage. "The dishonest may delay the punishment, but cannot avoid it" (Publilius Syrus).

On the other hand, the practice of justice may cause some pain, but ultimately will result in benefits. "First we must discuss about what is honest, then about what is advantageous "(Cicero, De Officiis 1.10). I do not think we want a life based on momentary pleasure, and continuous pain; but a life based on momentary pain, and continuous pleasure.

3.2 LOSS OF PLENTY

"A poor person's farm may produce much food,
but injustice sweeps it all away."

Proverbs 13:23 (NLT)

Of course, most people have compassion for the poor and want the greatest happiness for them. But still, Solomon says: If the poor have no justice, there will be no hope for them.

Despite of abundant food, and the land produce their crops, without justice all is lost. Have you noticed that often the life resembles a "bag with holes": We reap, we keep, we

invest, but without knowing why, suddenly everything is lost. "The little that is acquired dishonestly, makes lose much that is honestly acquired" (Chrysostom / Manutius, Adagia 1397).

What is the reason? The "bag with holes". Injustice creates holes that do not allow retain anything. We must have great care with all kinds of injustice, because they open up gaps in the lives of people and organizations. Solomon teaches that the foolish doeth evil and feels safe; but a wise man sees the consequences of evil and turns away from it. "Fearing always, the wise avoids evil" (Publilius Syrus).

3.3 THE WAY OF POVERTY

"If you make gifts to rich people
or oppress the poor to get rich,
you will become poor yourself."

Proverbs 22:16

He who oppresses the poor is so unfair, as the one who gives to the rich. Often, the injustice is motivated by self-aggrandizement. However, self-aggrandizement leads to poverty. Again, Solomon explains a difficult law to understand or explain. But it is a fact. It's like sowing and reaping: We sow injustice and we are wronged, that is, we

lost everything. "Our good or bad procedure, is our best friend or worst enemy" (Marquês de Maricá).

What does it mean to act unjustly? Means "offend the rights, act improperly, illegally, unjustifiably, unreasonably, without obeying the rules" (Dictionary). We act unfairly with others, and others act unjustly against us. It is a real cycle.

If we want to truly prosper, we must leave the "injustice cycle" as soon as possible! "You ask me how to get out of this life?! Get out anyway!" (Seneca). Someone committed an injustice against you? Do not follow the same path. Evil is with those who practice it. Choose always do good, and you will experience abundant goodness in your life.

3.4 PRINCIPLE OF THE BOOMERANG

"A ruler who lacks understanding is a great oppressor,
But he who hates covetousness will prolong his days."

Proverbs 28:16 (NKJV)

Oppress others is nonsense: Who torments others will also be tormented. And woe to him who thinks he is above this law... is completely mistaken. Avarice leads people to an oppressive life, but this lifestyle is short-lived.

Pretty soon, evil will return to those who practice it as a "boomerang".

You know the boomerang principle? "When we help others, we help ourselves" (John C. Maxwell). The opposite is also true: When we harm others, we harm ourselves. "He who sows injustice reaps misfortunes, because his violence will turn against him" (Solomon).

Make no mistake: If we dig a hole, we will fall on it. But if on the other hand, we are benefactors: we are doing well ourselves. All the good that we do comes back to us.

3.5 THE FACTOR OF LONGEVITY

"Ill-gotten treasures have no lasting value,
but righteousness delivers from death."

Proverbs 10:2 (NIV)

There are riches that are honestly acquired, and there are riches that are acquired dishonestly. It's not all equal? The important thing is not to be "rich"? No, as the proverb says: "All that glitters is not gold".

We should not think that all the rich are honest or dishonest. Time will be the test. All the wealth based on justice is durable. "Honest work produces honored wealth" (Marquês de Maricá). But the dishonest wealth is short-lived, and in the end, will be useless or even harmful. "The

joy of the dishonest soon turns into disgrace" (Publilius Syrus).

Solomon contrasts the dishonest enrichment with the righteousness, and says the honor is even able to rid a person of death. Only honesty will give longevity to success. We should not think that success is a sprint, but a marathon. Honesty is what will give us the strength to reach the goal. If someone searches the "shortcut" of injustice will be "disqualified" and unable to "compete" for success again. We should not abort our "competition".

Sometimes the lie seems more advantageous, however, is only a trap. "We think we are going to benefit when we are dishonest, but whatever gain we experience is always shortlived, and the consequences of being dishonest are longterm and ultimately outweigh the temporary gain dishonesty provided... Dishonesty has destroyed lives, marriages, Fortune 500 companies, and even governments" (Steven K. Scott).

3.6 THE ILLUSION OF LIES

"The riches you get by dishonesty soon disappear,
but not before they lead you into the jaws of death."

Proverbs 21:6

We cannot delude ourselves with "shortcuts" or with lies. It is an illusion that drags to death, or in other words, is an illusion dragging for failure. Someone might think: "But if I compete honestly, I'll never be the first". I cannot guarantee that the honest will be the first, but I'm sure that he will reach the goal! And will be a winner, because the real winner is not he who wins the others, but he who conquers himself! "Why do you care about the others, if you conquered yourself?" (Seneca).

We must overcome the "temptation" of injustice, lies, and the evil practice. True, these are our greatest enemies. No, they are not outside of us, they are within. And sometimes it is our own mind that deceives us! "Our greatest enemies dwell within ourselves: are our mistakes, vices and passions" (Marquês de Maricá). And if we win the inner enemies, we need not concern ourselves with external enemies. They are already defeated!

Believe that you have everything you need to win. Often the biggest obstacle to victory is ourselves. If we win ourselves and our inclination to evil: We will be the big winners. And our prosperity will be firm and lasting! "More gives us: kindness that hatred, honesty that fraud" (Gualterius Anglicus, Fabulae Aesopicae 60).

3.7 LESSONS OF WISDOM

- 1- Do good, although have some initial disadvantage.
- 2- Be afraid of bad consequences, and avoid evil.
- 3- Not harm the poor nor give to the rich.
- 4- Not commit unjust acts, offensive, improper or illegitimate.
- 5- Someone commits an injustice against you? Don't do the same.
- 6- Do good to your enemies.
- 7- Don't be fool, stingy, miserly or oppressor.
- 8- Help others, not harm.
- 9- Try to be honorable and honest.
- 10- Don't desire illicit wealth.
- 11- Surpass yourself and all the "temptation" of injustice, falsehood and evil practice.

SECRET 4

THE KEY TO GLORY

4.1 THE MASTER KEY

"Knowledge is the ultimate power tool."

Bill Gates

We have a problem? For any problem there is always a solution. Imagine that a problem is like a closed door, and we don't have the key. The only solution is to find the key, or try to break down the door to the force! Often this is how we try to solve the problems: by force (which is difficult). But where is the key? Wisdom is the key to solving all the problems: is the master key that can open all the doors! Wisdom is better than strength.

It is no coincidence that Solomon is considered one of the richest men of all time, and also one of the wisest. For him, the wisdom was the main thing. In fact, it's all a matter of wisdom. "What else can I do, besides inciting you to the conquest of wisdom?" (Seneca).

If you are experiencing a problem that you cannot solve, it's because there is something you don't already know. Having knowledge of what you need to know, is the first step to solve any problem. "If you have a big problem in your life, all that means is that you are being a small person!" (T. Harv Eker). How can we be bigger than our problems? Through wisdom.

Therefore, the Master advises us to seek wisdom above all else. Wisdom is the answer to everything else. And the more you grow in wisdom, more will grow in all areas of your life. "The rewards of gaining true wisdom are literally beyond your imagination" (Steven K. Scott).

4.2 ADVANTAGES OF WISDOM

"Wisdom offers you long life,
as well as wealth and honor.

Wisdom can make your life pleasant
and lead you safely through it."

Proverbs 3:16-17

Wisdom gives us something, and not little! Solomon says that wisdom gives us a long life. People say that life gives us wisdom, but the wise says that wisdom gives us life! "Those who build their lives on a foundation of wisdom actually live longer" (Steven K. Scott).

And not only means more years of life... But a prosperous and abundant life! Solomon says that wisdom does not add just quantity of life, but also quality. It's so important to have quality as quantity. The ideal that wisdom offers us is: quality in quantity! Wisdom is unmatched. Everything we could want in this life, cannot compare with the wisdom!

All we need is wisdom. We don't need more money, more health, more work, more goods, more friends... What we need is more wisdom, and the rest will come by addition. "Many complain of little money, others complain of little fortune, some complain of low memory, but no one complains of having little judgment" (Marquês de Maricá).

Wisdom can offer us riches and glory, and all that we cannot even imagine! Wisdom is amazing, and makes authentic wonders. Whenever you search, find and apply wisdom: Your life will change for the better.

The path of wisdom is pleasant and safe. On the one hand, you can enjoy the journey: What was once boring and unpleasant, can become a pleasure. And on the other hand, is a safe journey: Does not cause frustration or disappointment, wisdom has the amazing ability to surprise you every day.

4.3 HOW TO FIND THE WISDOM?

"I love those who love me;
whoever looks for me can find me.
I have riches and honor to give, prosperity and success."
Wisdom (Proverbs 8:17-18)

When Solomon speaks of wisdom, it seems he is talking about a person! Wisdom was really special to him. Solomon loved the Wisdom. Wisdom loved Solomon. Wisdom means "quality of knowing, deep knowledge of things, knowledge gained or natural, a lot of knowledge, science, vast and varied education, righteousness, justice" (Dictionary).

Would you like to be loved by Wisdom? So first, you need to love wisdom. Wisdom never reject your love. If you seek, you can find the Wisdom with open arms to welcome you and give you love and attention. Contrary to what many think, Wisdom is not hidden but is clearly visible, is not far but very affordable! "Wisdom is not hidden but shouts in public! We must go out to find the wisdom and be his friends" (John C. Maxwell).

And once you find the wisdom, there is great wealth for you. Wisdom is not poor, no. In fact, the Wisdom owns all the riches! And besides, Wisdom has great generosity: has glory, success and lasting prosperity, especially for you.

Someone will think, "But I don't deserve any of this...". However, Wisdom is no respecter of persons. No

matter your age, social status, or past... Wisdom want, can, and will transform your life for the better! And the amazing thing is that Wisdom has joy in transforming lives. "My joy is to be among humans" (Wisdom, in "Proverbs of Solomon" 8:31 BPT09).

4.4 RICHES AND TREASURES

"I walk the way of righteousness;
I follow the paths of justice,
giving wealth to those who love me,
filling their houses with treasures."

Wisdom (Proverbs 8:20-21)

Those who love Wisdom, will be duly rewarded. The path of Wisdom is a path of justice and equity. If you follow the path of wisdom, it is certain that you will prosper. Wisdom does not lie, and can do even more than it promises. Wisdom rewards those who follow his way. "A happy life is the product of wisdom" (Seneca).

The path of wisdom is full of riches and treasures. It is a wonderful journey. Solomon has done this trip, and left a book written to encourage everyone to go this route.

Many think: "Solomon was a privileged man, was born in a golden cradle". But the truth is that the only

privilege that Solomon had, was go the way of Wisdom. Everything else was the result of wisdom in his life.

And if you follow the same path, will also arrive at the same place. That is why Solomon said: "Keep company with the wise and you will become wise" (Pr 13:20). In other words: He who walks in wisdom will also have riches, glory, success and prosperity! "Science is power, strength and wealth; the nation with more intelligence and wisdom will be the most powerful, rich and strong nation" (Marquês de Maricá, in his book "Maxims, Thoughts and Reflections").

4.5 ADVISE AND SUCCESS

"I have counsel and sound wisdom;

I have insight; I have strength."

Wisdom (Proverbs 8:14 ESV)

Wisdom has a function, a mission that scrupulously complies (all days, minutes and seconds). If you don't want to prosper, then you should move away from the Wisdom. Wisdom makes people succeed, and transforms the biggest "losers" in the biggest winners ever.

Wisdom is the best counselor. Wisdom knows how we can achieve all things. "The way to achieve it, only wisdom can point it out" (Seneca). Wisdom knows all the

secrets to victory, and is always available to share these secrets with their close friends. Solomon was a great friend of Wisdom, one of his closest friends. But Wisdom chose not Solomon. It was Solomon who chose Wisdom. He loved and sought, found and followed... So, Wisdom also loved him and made him prosper in everything!

The function of wisdom is: give success. It is the true "source" of all successes. There is nothing that Wisdom cannot reach. Wisdom is the best friend we can have. It is the intelligence capable of transmitting new forces. Able to supply all our needs, help and strengthen each day. "Acquiring true wisdom provides a solid foundation from which you can make a lifetime of wise decisions... This wisdom is not passive, but rather extremely active. It can produce a lifetime of extraordinary success and happiness" (Steven K. Scott).

4.6 STRENGTH, POWER AND VICTORY

"Being wise is better than being strong;
yes, knowledge is more important than strength.

After all, you must make careful plans
before you fight a battle, and the more good advice you get,
the more likely you are to win."

Proverbs 24:5-6

What is the size of your strength? Do you consider yourself a strong person? Even though I don't know you personally, I can answer: Your strength is equal to the size of your wisdom. "The power of men grows with increasing their knowledge" (Marquês de Maricá). We want more power? So we need more wisdom!

Wisdom is power. Any weakness just shows the lack of wisdom. Wisdom is like a light, and where the light is, there can be no darkness. There can be no weakness, poverty or failure... Where is the wisdom: There is abundance, wealth and glory!

Wisdom is victory. And there is nothing, absolutely nothing that can defeat wisdom. "By seeking wise counsel before you initiate action, you are far more likely to choose your battles wisely, and win the battles you choose" (Steven K. Scott). How to achieve victory? The "loser" is rushing to give answers, the "winner" begins by asking questions. To win the battles, we need good plans. The greater the preparation, the higher the efficiency.

If we are on the side of wisdom, victory is certain. But if we are on the other side and we want to win, we can only do one thing: Switch to the other team! The team of winners is the team of wisdom. Good counselors, top experts, the largest and most powerful army are on the side of wisdom. And anyone who fights against the wisdom, is

an authentic suicide, is fighting against his own life! "Those who do not find me hurt themselves; anyone who hates me loves death" (Wisdom in Proverbs 8:36).

4.7 BE SUCCESSFUL

"It is foolish to follow your own opinions.

Be safe, and follow the teachings of wiser people."

Proverbs 28:26

In any battle, we can know who will be the winner, even before the battle begins: The winner is always... who has more wisdom! He who proceeds with wisdom, will always be successful. After every defeat we should ask: "Where I have not acted wisely?" The answer to this question will determine the solution of the problem.

What is one of the biggest enemies of wisdom? The folly: is which leads us to rely on our own ideas, and not in wisdom. The Principle of Ignorance says: "I only know that I know everything". And as the proverb says: "He who presumes to know everything, knows nothing". Our folly fills us with pride and vanity and blind our eyes. The ruin is obvious. Remember: "It's easier to act out of ignorance than it is to become educated" (Steven K. Scott).

He who trusts in his folly is like one that relies on luck, it's like "give a shot in the dark". The probability of

success is low (almost zero). Instead of having "certainties", it is prudent doubting our own ideas. "There is so much wisdom in the skepticism of sages, as a lot of ignorance in the credulity of fools" (Marquês de Maricá). We should not believe everything we think, remember: Our mind also blind! "In the past, I believed that what my mind said was truth. I learned that in many ways, my mind was my biggest obstacle to success" (T. Harv Eker).

We need to doubt our certainties and uncertainties! How Publilius Syrus, Latin writer of ancient Rome, said: "Doubt is one-half of wisdom". And wisdom is the light that illuminates our eyes. Show us where the problem is, and gives us the solution. Shows where we should go, and the way to get there. There is nothing that wisdom cannot do for us.

4.8 THE IMPORTANCE OF EXPERIENCE

"It takes wisdom to build a house
and intelligence to make it safe.
With experience the rooms are filled
with valuable and tasteful objects."

Proverbs 24:3-4 BPT09

Nothing of real value is built in this life without wisdom. Wisdom is the architect of all good projects. All that is done on the basis of wisdom is safe and durable. And contrary to what many think, is not the age that gives us wisdom: "It's through reflection that we acquire wisdom... It's the reflection that leads to wisdom, and not the age" (Publilius Syrus).

However, the elders have something that most young people do not have: Experience. "When youth comes to age for advice he receives the wisdom of years" (George S. Clason). The experience is extremely valuable when we reflect and learn lessons of wisdom. "The men of experience and insight often prewise... Reflection teaches many truths, but imagination teaches many mistakes and illusions" (Marquês de Maricá). When we learn from the past, we are better prepared to face the future. And generally, the decisions based on past experiences are the right ones. "Experience is the mother of knowledge" (Latin proverb).

Our life can be compared to a house. On what foundation we are building? If we are not building our house based on wisdom, the more likely it is to fall. We can blame the "storm", the "winds" of life, misfortune... But the truth is that wisdom prepares us to face all these things, and yet remain standing.

What is the secret? The secret is in the construction of our life: If was built wisely or not. This means that our past is crucial? Not necessarily. Wisdom can do more for us in the present than what we have done so far. You know the expression: "I was blind, and now I see"? This is exactly how we feel when wisdom opens our eyes: Suddenly, a new world appears around us!

4.9 CHASING THE WISDOM

"Wise people live in wealth and luxury,
but stupid people spend their money as fast as they get it."

Proverbs 21:20

Wisdom wants to fill our home, our life, with rich and precious treasures. "Oh, I wish!" This is what will happen to you if wisdom is the foundation of your life. Wisdom is always followed by riches and glory. It is impossible to have one and not the other, are inseparable. We lack the wealth and glory in our lives? So let's say: "Come wisdom and changes my life!"

In your life, the wisdom is welcome? Or is it just an excuse for other things? Anyway, the important thing is to love wisdom above all else. How Come? What is the difference? We always pursue what we love the most. If we love wealth, we'll run behind the wealth and will flee from

us. But if we run behind the wisdom, wealth will run behind us. "The ambition that aims at wisdom and virtue is a noble and honorable ambition" (Marquês de Maricá).

In fact, the rich pursue wisdom. And while you walk behind the wisdom, riches will walk at your side. However, your focus should be on wisdom. Wisdom is the source for all things. Why Solomon says: "The wise man has; the fool spends all"? Because the wise man has the "source of wisdom" to sprout wealth at all times. But a foolish man does not have the continuous "source", and ends up with nothing. "Who can measure in bags of gold, the value of wisdom? Without wisdom, gold is quickly lost by those who have it, but with wisdom, gold can be secured by those who have it not" (George S. Clason).

4.10 WEALTH OR STUPIDITY?

"Wise people are rewarded with wealth,
but fools are known by their foolishness."

Proverbs 14:24

The reward of wisdom is wealth, but the reward of folly is stupidity. Often, we value the insignificant and reject what is valuable. Wisdom or folly? Wealth or stupidity? What will be better? It may seem a stupid

question, but there are people who love their stupidity so much... more than anything else!

"But we cannot be with both at the same time?" Never. Wisdom hates foolishness, and says: "Or the folly or me?". And the sad reality is that many of us are not willing to abandon the folly and follow the wisdom! And then we complain of our misery... or else, we laugh stupidly in the misery! But while the folly is present, it is and will always be an obstacle to wisdom.

And what is the reason? A fool considers himself wise and despises wisdom... "I imagine that many could have achieved the wisdom, if they had not imagined that have reached wisdom" (Seneca, *De Tranquillitate Animi* 1:16). I can imagine the wisdom, mourn for us, saying: "I want to give prosperity; but they don't want... They prefer stupidity, instead of my wealth..."

4.11 POVERTY AND DISGRACE

"Someone who will not learn will be poor and disgraced.

Anyone who listens to correction is respected."

Proverbs 13:18

Poverty and disgrace... are the terrible consequences for those who despise wisdom. "But then, the wisdom punishes?!" No, the wisdom does not punish anyone, the

man is who punishes himself! It takes humility and willingness to learn, to enjoy the "correction"... but this is the path of growth. "He who wants to learn is happy to be corrected; he who hates reproof is ignorant... He who does not accept the correction, harms himself; one who accepts reproof gets understanding" (Solomon).

He who despises wisdom despises all that wisdom has to give. If we reject the wisdom, we also reject everything else... Wisdom loves human beings, wisdom wants to give prosperity to all; however, we have to give permission. Wisdom knocks at the door of our life, but we are the only ones who can open the door. Wisdom hear us crying inside, and then screams from the outside: "Open the door, I can help you". But we don't believe... We even think that wisdom wants to rob us!

Rob? What we have that is so good, that wisdom wants to rob us? Nothing, except our misery... That yes, the wisdom wants to remove completely from our lives. Often, the problem is we are so accustomed, that we don't want to change... However, without change there is no hope! "You're learning, whether you are in constant change" (John C. Maxwell).

4.12 LEARN TO REFLECT

"Do yourself a favor and learn all you can;

then remember what you learn and you will prosper."

Proverbs 19:8

Wisdom is learned. No one is born wise. How to become wise? Through learning. Wisdom grows with learning. And it is possible to decrease? Yes, wisdom decreases when we stop learning. "If you stop learning today, ceases to be a leader tomorrow... In order to be an enduring leader, you always need to be learning" (John C. Maxwell). Life is a constant learning. Learning is not a luxury, but a necessity! "If you're not constantly learning, will be left behind" (T. Harv Eker).

The wise man is a lifelong learner. "The wise is who consider himself the most ignorant among all; the wise know recognize the unlimited extension of their own ignorance" (Marquês de Maricá). Do you know anyone who thinks know everything? He knows nothing... This is also a characteristic of those who have no wisdom: They think know everything. "The beginning of healing is the self-consciousness of error" (Epicurus, Letters to Lucilius 28: 9). Accept the reality is the first step for change!

Do you know which are the 3 most dangerous words in the english language? "I know that" (T. Harv Eker). Do you remember the famous words of the great philosopher Socrates? He said: "I only know that I know nothing". Not knowing is the first step to learn. "Remain a learner your

whole life. Go into every situation asking questions instead of giving answers" (Steven K. Scott). There is more hope for those who want to learn, than for those who know everything.

Wisdom is not a "lake" of standing water. Wisdom is a "source" of living water, always moving. And he that "swim" in these waters, never stands still, is always learning new things. Wisdom is a real inexhaustible "source", and his knowledge is infinite! A wise man does not delight to know everything... he is happy to always be learning. The wise have pleasure in knowledge. To the wise, knowledge is tastier than the most delicious food; and more valuable than pure gold, is something truly indescribable!

Some ask: "And what does that have to do with my happiness?" Everything! Solomon says that "learning to think is work for our own good". Reflection is the way of wisdom, and the destination is happiness. When the sage acquires wisdom, is so wonderful that neither realizes that he is working! And he is working for himself, for his own good.

I remember a survey we did at school when I was a teenager. One question was: "What is your biggest dream?" Analyzing the responses, I saw that the response of most students was: "I want to be happy". It seems that this is the great desire of every human being... How to realize this dream? Solomon gives the answer: "Who seeks wisdom

finds happiness". Wow! Here is the answer that all people seek: Wisdom is the way to happiness! "The main part of the success is to have judgment" (Erasmus, Adagia 5,1,87).

It Will Be? Yes, I'm sure because I observe in my own life: The more I learn wisdom, the more I have happiness! But I'm still not satisfied, I know that wisdom has much more to offer me. So I have a desire: love the wisdom above all things, and seek the wisdom every day of my life! I am sure it will be a fantastic journey.

4.13 I LOVE THE WISDOM

"My child, don't forget what I teach you.

Always remember what I tell you to do.

My teaching will give you a long and prosperous life."

Proverbs 3:1-2

I want longevity,

I wish prosperity...

I seek you, wisdom!

I love you with my heart,

I desire you with my soul

as the love of my life.

I want to be your friend,

and grow along with you

in each step of the route...
Guided in you, I'm sure.
I am happy, I have future
and renewed hope!

You are my inspiration,
the great motivation
to be successful.
More than just pleasure,
you are part of my nature.
I want to marry you:

"I promise to be faithful,
love and respect you
wisdom, my sweeting.
In joy and prosperity,
health and longevity,
every day of my living!"

4.14 LIFE AND HOPE

"You may be sure that wisdom is good for the soul.
Get wisdom and you have a bright future."

Proverbs 24:14

Wisdom is the source of everything. With wisdom, we need not fear the future. On the contrary, there is great hope for us when we walk in wisdom. And this hope will never be frustrated. Wisdom cannot deceive or disappoint, wisdom is real. And is the answer to all things. It is the key to a successful and abundant life.

How often, we fear the future? And we care about our lives? Why live without hope? Wisdom is all we need. If we have the wisdom, we have everything. We must seek practical wisdom for our lives. "To be happy is not enough know the theory, it must be put into practice... Wisdom is limited to actions, not to words" (Seneca).

The learning process always includes three steps: 1- Knowledge; 2- Understanding; 3- Application. The results arise when we apply in practice what we know and understand in theory. "You must learn to translate wisdom and strong feelings into labor" (Jim Rohn).

Wisdom is not automatic or immediate. It is necessary to seek intentionally. If we love wisdom above all things, wisdom will give us everything we need. Solomon even said: "The beginning of wisdom is this: Get wisdom. Though it cost all you have, get understanding" (Proverbs 4:7 NIV). And why lose everything we possess in exchange for wisdom and knowledge? Wisdom and knowledge will give us much more than we possess. Wisdom is the key that

can open all the doors, even those doors we seemed impossible!

4.15 LESSONS OF WISDOM

Above all, love wisdom.

Seek the wisdom intentionally.

Before you go to "war", prepare a good strategy.

Don't be fool; don't believe in your ideas only, nor think that you know everything.

Be prudent, and doubt from yourself.

Learn from experience through reflection.

Make decisions based on past experiences.

Focus on wisdom: pursue wisdom, not riches.

Listen to wisdom, and ignore the folly.

Desire learning and like to be corrected.

Learn to reflect daily and seek to understand.

Do not think you are "wise", but an apprentice.

Always say: "I only know that I know nothing".

Instead of giving answers, ask questions.

Seek to know, understand and apply in practice what you learned.

SECRET 5

THE ORIGIN OF RUIN

5.1 MASTER YOURSELF

"The most powerful man
is the man who has absolute power over himself."

Seneca

What is the natural tendency of people on the road to success? Often, we tend to try dominating others. But this focus could not be more wrong. Our biggest obstacle to success is not the others. In fact, people are a great help to us. Our biggest obstacle is ourselves. "Man! Learn to overcome yourself, and you will conquer all" (Marquês de Maricá).

It is very easy to point fingers and blame others for our own failure, but let us remember the Mirror Principle: "The first person we must examine is ourselves" (John C. Maxwell). Not worth blame others for our performance, because our success or failure depends only of us. We must never forget the Bob Principle: "When Bob has a problem

with everyone, Bob is usually the problem" (John C. Maxwell). The real issue is to overcome ourselves: today better than yesterday, tomorrow better than today. Solomon said: "It is better to be patient than powerful. It is better to win control over yourself than over whole cities" (Proverbs 16:32).

The hardest thing is not dominate others, but master himself! "What I wish for you is the dominion over yourself" (Seneca). If you want to fail, you need not worry about that. Just let things go naturally. But if you want to succeed, you need to be very intentional about what you think, say or do. There can be no progress if there is no intentionality. Without continuous improvement, there is no progress.

5.2 CAUTION OR NEGLIGENCE?

"Be careful what you say and protect your life.

A careless talker destroys himself."

Proverbs 13:3

One who takes care of thoughts, words and actions... guards, protects and is good for whom? For himself. We need to take care of ourselves. Because if we do not, who will? "The first person you lead is you, and the first organ you master is your mind" (John C. Maxwell).

Our life is like a beautiful garden... But a garden that needs care. If not, the more likely it is to become an authentic scrub! Full of brambles, thorns and animals... a completely careless ground, ugly and abandoned.

Am I overreacting? How is an abandoned field? Careless, ugly, desert... Our life, our mind, our mouth, our marriage, our children, our work... cannot be careless. Which means carelessness? Means "do not be careful; neglect; contempt; ignorance; forgetfulness" (Dictionary).

And if we are careless, we know what awaits us? Ruin! If this is our current state in a part of our lives, there is no need to despair. That was the most natural thing that happened to us: Ruin. It's just overlook the words... it's just act without thinking... just let things go... and go straight to ruin! "Rarely have we repent of our silence; often we repent of having spoken... We achieved more wins when we remain silent, than when we speak" (Marquês de Maricá).

However, while there is a possibility for change, there will also be a possibility for hope. And if we wish to change and take care of our own lives, we'll be taking the first step to success.

5.3 WORK OR TALK?

"Work and you will earn a living;
if you sit around talking you will be poor."

Proverbs 14:23

"There are jobs that compensate", that's what Solomon said? No, "all the work has reward!" Everything a person does will have its due reward. All work is useful and profitable... But you know what often ruins everything? Our mouth!

The "much speaking" is quite harmful. Do you know people who talk and talk and talk... but never do anything? This is very dangerous, because according to Solomon, leads to poverty! "We have one mouth, but two arms; we must be simple in speech but strong in work" (Marquês de Maricá).

We must not fall into the trap of words, nor should we think that words are the work. There are many people who talk so much about the work... and end up not having the strength to work! Why? They talked and talked and talked... until they reach the point of spending all their energy into words. As it says a popular saying: "The weakest wheel is the wheel that makes more noise".

We must be careful, it seems "joke" but it is very serious. Maybe that's why the Chinese have a saying: "Do not think, do". And the Chinese are hard workers, because they are practical: Instead of spending energy on words or thoughts, they spend energy into concrete actions. And

according to Solomon, the reward is at work. "The heritage grows with deeds, not words" (Seybold 267).

Master your mouth. "If you can control your mouth, you can also dominate any other body part" (John C. Maxwell). Focus all your energy into concrete actions and you will see that this brings great results. Try to adopt the following slogan: "Say little and do much" (DAPR 752). Remember: The secret is in the secret.

5.4 THE PROTECTION WALLS

"If you cannot control your anger,
you are as helpless as a city without walls, open to attack."

Proverbs 25:28

In the past, men built walls around their cities, to protect themselves from possible enemies. And Solomon made the following comparison: Just as a city without walls, has no protection; also a person who does not control their impulses, is unprotected. "In our culture, where there are so many who do not control emotions, the one who keeps this control has a huge advantage. Not only will enjoy greater success in the workplace, as it is much more likely to have good relations at home" (Steven K. Scott).

The more you master yourself (thoughts, emotions, impulses, words, actions...), the more you will be protected

against possible enemies. And why is this important? Well, winning is important, but not losing is also important. You want to win? Want to thrive? And then lose everything? Of course not. But if we do not control ourselves, we will be dominated. "The wise rule his heart; the fool will be his slave" (Publilius Syrus).

Take the example of football soccer. Have you seen any team composed only of midfielders and forwards? No. All teams are also made up of a goalkeeper and defenders. For what? To defend and prevent the opposing team from scoring a goal. The defense is as important as the attack. There are even coaches who say: "The defense is the best offense". How do teams win soccer games? By doing more goals than the opponent (and this implies not only a good offense, but also a good defense). It is in this way that we will succeed in life.

How to defend well in life? Through self-control. We need to defend ourselves from ourselves! You can be your greatest enemy. The lack of control leads to poverty, but self-control leads to wealth. Start building your protective walls. At any time, the protection will make all the difference.

Take particular care with your words. Your focus should be on actions, because your actions are your great potential. Are your actions that will bring you the greatest rewards. Follow the advice of Solomon: master yourself,

roll up your sleeves and get to work! Do not stay in words... Take action. The success of tomorrow starts today. The little things today will make a big difference tomorrow! What you do in the present, determines what you will be in the future. "Small attempts, repeated, will complete any undertaking" (Og Mandino). Take one step at a time... and you will achieve the unthinkable!

5.5 LESSONS OF WISDOM

Never try to blame or control others.

Your focus should be master yourself.

Do not trust in the natural order of things: think, speak and act intentionally.

Cultivate good thoughts and speak good words.

Control your impulses and emotions.

Dominate your mouth, putting energy into concrete actions.

Roll up your sleeves and get to work.

Adopt the following motto: "Say little and do much".

SECRET 6

WAY TO ABUNDANCE

6.1 THE BRIDGE TO SUCCESS

"The only place where success comes before work is in the dictionary, due to the alphabetical order!"

Albert Einstein

What is the path to abundance and success? What is the path to personal fulfillment? Let me give you a tip: Do not bother to know the way... Your concern should be to walk! "The beginning is in itself half of the work" (Seneca). We wonder so much about the way, and we were stagnant... How hard is making decisions? We are so plagued by doubt and fear, to the point where we stay rooted in our "comfort zone".

And then we found a big problem: We're not going anywhere, because we remain stagnant! What is the path to abundance? This question reveals something: there is a path to abundance. If you want abundance, cannot sit still. There will be more hope for someone who walks, or someone who

stops? A person might say: "It depends on the chosen path". However, I believe that there is always more hope for those who walk. Because he may follow the wrong path (often), but he can also follow the right path. However, for those who are stagnant, the odds are always zero.

We can never achieve success if we remain inactive. Imagine that you have a dream (like Martin Luther King said "I have a dream"): And between you and your dream, there is a bridge. You will never achieve your dream, if you not cross to the other side of the river. If you stay on this side, it is much more convenient. But to achieve our dreams, we need to have the courage to cross the "bridge".

What is this "bridge"? If I had to give it a name, it would probably be: "Action". "Action will lead thee forward to the successes thou dost desire... Decide what thou desirest to accomplish and then work will aid thee to achieve it!" (George S. Clason). Nothing comes from nothing, for every result there is an action. "Action is the 'bridge' between the inner world and the outer world" (T. Harv Eker).

What separates you from your dream is action. It is necessary you do something to achieve your dream, and walk with perseverance toward him. Even if the winds are contrary, even if others try to discourage you, you need to cross the "bridge". Jim Rohn, considered the greatest philosopher of the business world in the United States, calls

this bridge "Discipline". He says: "Discipline is the bridge between goals and accomplishment".

Solomon calls this bridge "Diligence". He believed that with diligence, we could achieve anything we wanted. And without diligence, nothing would be achieved. We could also call this bridge "Perseverance": Perseverance is the distance between a dream and its realization. Without perseverance nothing is achieved. How to develop perseverance? Through passion. Without passion there can be no perseverance. All the action needs an motor: Motivation! Motivation is the fuel for action. No one can stop a motivated man!

6.2 DILIGENCE OR POVERTY?

"Being lazy will make you poor,
but hard work will make you rich.

A sensible person gathers the crops when they are ready;
it is a disgrace to sleep through the time of harvest."

Proverbs 10:4-5

Solomon makes the distinction of two people: The inactive person and diligent person. According to him, the idle man is condemned to poverty, while the diligent man is destined to wealth. "Diligent" means: "jealous; worker; dedicated; excellent; active; agile" (Dictionary).

Nothing is by chance. No one is rich or poor by chance. This is not to judge the "poor" and "rich" or catalog them as "inactive" or "diligent". The important thing for us is to realize that inactivity leads to poverty, as well as the diligence to wealth. "Laziness makes us lose and not win; The diligence makes us win and not lose" (Marquês de Maricá).

We need to learn to be diligent people, and understand that inaction is harmful. "Enterprise is better than ease" (Jim Rohn). There is a maxim that says the following: "Retain what to eat, not what to do". Solomon says that whoever collects in summer is prudent. But he that is "sleeping" instead of collecting deserves contempt. What does this mean? You can never stand still, when you must act! "Action is the food and drink which will nourish my success" (Og Mandino).

Who is diligent is prudent because it makes what should be done. And the diligent reap good results. But those who do nothing also have nothing to harvest. Think on every action, like a good seed that you throw to the ground. Later or sooner, this will result in good fruit for you. And the more you sow, the more you will reap. "The soil says, «Don't bring me your need, bring me your seed»" (Jim Rohn).

6.3 WORK YOUR LAND

"A hard-working farmer has plenty to eat,
but it is stupid to waste time on useless projects."

Proverbs 12:11

Who cultivates will have bread in abundance. Who does not cultivate his land will have no bread. We must understand that we are not talking about "agriculture", but figuratively. This is a fundamental law of our planet called "Earth": We reap what we sow. "There is no profit without work" (Latin proverb).

What should we cultivate? Our own land. I must cultivate my land, and you must cultivate your land. I can not cultivate your land for you, and you can not do the same for me. Everyone is responsible for his own life. If we do not cultivate our land, who will? There are things that only we can do, and no one can do it for us. And when we do what we need to do, we will always have a good result.

But why do not we do what we should do? Because of our folly. In fact, we exchanged our responsibilities by trifles. That is, unimportant things that do not lead anywhere... and that simply make us lose our precious time. "Keep first things first... distraction is the enemy of direction" (John C. Maxwell).

When we talk about "cultivating", we are talking about work. When we talk about trifles, we are talking

about entertainment. Work can be difficult, but the entertainment is always easy. What will be the smartest choice? "If you are willing to do only what's easy, life will be hard. But if you are willing to do what's hard, life will be easy" (T. Harv Eker). We should not choose what is good, but what is best.

6.4 WORK OR ILLUSIONS

"A hard-working farmer has plenty to eat.
People who waste time will always be poor."

Proverbs 28:19

Cultivate the land? Or chase illusions? (wasting time) An abundant life or a life of misery... How many do not have the illusion of life in abundance but never work in their own land? "Most people aspire to glory, but few want to work" (Latin proverb). The expectation generates frustration, the work generates reward.

Often, our mistake is this: Believe in the illusion of an "easy path" that leads to abundance. But remember: If it were easy, had already been reached. When a path seems easy, we should be suspicious; when a path seems difficult, we must walk. Wait difficulties, and you will be better prepared for whatever comes! What is "easy" can be difficult; and what is "difficult" can become easy. A life

without struggle is a life without victories. Fight for what you believe, and your efforts will never be in vain. The greater the struggle, the greater the victory!

But when we have an “easy mind”, anything that requires a little effort is enough reason to give up. And whenever we see someone successful, we consider that person was “lucky”. However, we forget that there was a price to pay (and there will always be a price). "We envy the wealth, but we do not envy the job to gaining wealth" (Marquês de Maricá).

The work has always been, and will always be necessary. We need to work our own land; we need to do what no one else can do for us. Working in our area, chasing our own goals, investing in what is ours, improve, progress, advance, conquer... We must keep our focus: concentration is the first step to achieve a goal. The greater is the focus, the greater is the power. We must turn away from everything that deceives and distracts, and prevents us from working. Believe that you can succeed without work, is pure illusion. "Sacrifice always precedes success" (John C. Maxwell).

6.5 TAKE CARE

"Take care of a fig tree and you will have figs to eat.
Servants who take care of their master will be honored."

Proverbs 27:18

Diligent is the one who takes care of what is his. The diligent man works for himself. What happens to a diligent person? The diligent will reap good fruit; he will have good results of their own work. "Remember, work, well-done, does good to the man who does it. It makes him a better man" (George S. Clason). The diligent man will be satisfied with himself, he will be happy in their own work, in their personal development. The diligent man will be awarded with honors, and he will not lack for anything.

The diligence, that Solomon speaks, has much to do with personal responsibility. Do what must be done. The problem is that often we do not do what we should do, but what we want. And when we do what we want, we will have what we must. But when we do what we must, we will have what we want. "Applying diligence to any area of our lives always brings profitable results" (Steven K. Scott).

The "fruit" is sweet, but the work can be bitter. However, what is best: Sweet work, and bitter "fruit"? Or, bitter work and "fruit" sweet? If we weigh in the balance, we see that the end is always more important than the beginning. "Work is bitter; but its fruits are sweet and pleasant" (Marquês de Maricá).

6.6 AWAKEN OR IMPOVERISH?

"If you spend your time sleeping, you will be poor.

Keep busy and you will have plenty to eat."

Proverbs 20:13

Sleeping is good, but if we spent the whole time on what is "good", will result in something bad. When Solomon speaks of sleep, he is speaking of inaction. And inaction leads to poverty. We need to wake up. Sleeping speaks of our comfort zone, speaks of the warmth of our "bed"... speaks of the warmth of our home. But for those who want to thrive, this is not the way forward. We need to get out of bed and go to battle. We must face the cold outside.

We need to leave the comfort of poverty. Yes, poverty can be a comfort! Often we are so used to misery, that we do not imagine living otherwise! Someone would say: "If I could live without being poor? I could, but it was not the same..." The human being adapts to any environment, and once adapted is "accommodated". Stagnation requires resignation, progress requires change.

When a man will leave the comfort zone? When he feels uncomfortable with the comfort, and begins to act! In this sense, the "crises" are so important to us. Bring us to the desire for change, which never exist if we were not experiencing a "crisis". "Each obstacle is a comrade-in-arms

forcing you to become better... Every setback is an opportunity to advance" (Og Mandino).

The difficulties do not weaken you, just make you stronger. There are always two ways of looking at a problem: as an obstacle or a challenge. One problem is an opportunity for growth. No problems, no progress. The need creates the opportunity. Face your problems as opportunities to advance. "The need is master" (Latin proverb).

The "misery" should lead man to diligence in order to achieve abundance. "Poverty" should bother a man to work and achieve what it lacks. "With hard work, intelligence and economy: only is poor, one who does not want to be rich" (Marquês de Maricá).

6.7 LAZY OR DILIGENT

"No matter how much a lazy person may want something,
he will never get it.

A hard worker will get everything he wants."

Proverbs 13:4

One cannot achieve a target that has never been defined. "The main reason why most people don't have what want is because they don't know what want" (T. Harv Eker). The problem is many people don't wish, or don't have goals to achieve, and have nothing to motivate them. They

covet the achievements of others, and what they have. But don't realize that with hard work and dedication, they could also get there...

What to do? Establish targets, commit, and think on strategies to achieve them... write your goals on paper: it is the first step to its materialization. "The commitment distinguishes the people who make, and the people who dream" (John C. Maxwell).

What does the diligent? The diligent does not covet other people, but he gets what he wants. The diligent man does not worship the others as "demigods". No, the diligent says: "If I want something, I can get it; if others did, so can I". The "diligent" is the one who does something about it. He not only wants, he gets. And what does it do? He does something, and that's the difference between the diligent and the lazy. "Our attitude often is the only difference between success and failure" (John C. Maxwell).

The diligent and the lazy are on the bank of a river, and they dream of reaching the other side. The diligent man seeks and finds a bridge (action) to achieve the dream. When the diligent reaches the other side, the lazy sees it and says: "The diligent is a lucky man... oh how I would like to be in his shoes". But he never says: "If the diligent man reached, I can too! What did he do to get there?" No, the lazy man dreams of the day when someone will invite him to go by boat to the other side...

The sluggard is waiting for his dream... he is passive. But why we should be waiting if we can go into battle? The diligent says: "If my dream does not come to me, I go to him". The diligent always takes the initiative. He does not expect things will happen... He makes things happen! And that's the difference. "Dare is achieve, in innumerable cases" (Marquês de Maricá). Believing is the first step towards the impossible...

6.8 THE IMPORTANCE OF ATTITUDE

"If you are lazy, you will never get what you are after,
but if you work hard, you will get a fortune."

Proverbs 12:27

The lazy man achieves nothing, but the diligent says: "Yes, I can!" The diligent man believes he can, even when no one believes. The sluggard does not believe and therefore does nothing. He has only one motto: "I give up before I start." But when someone asks the diligent man: "How long should you try?" He answers: "Until" (Jim Rohn, in "The Treasury of Quotes").

The lazy can not meet their own needs. These needs should drive the Lazy to action. But he sleeps with the needs! "Oh, if I were the Diligent..."

What does the Diligent? It does, and that's the difference. The sluggard does nothing; the Diligent does. Why? What leads them to act this way? A simple word that makes all the difference: Attitude! Their attitude will determine their altitude... That is, the attitude of a person will determine what will achieve. "Where the determination is, the way can be found" (George S. Clason). Do it all with attitude, and the results will come.

The Diligent is a conqueror! He never stands still. The Diligent can achieve much beyond their needs. He is like a "lioness" in pursuit of his prey... and he never gives up on his goal. But the lazy man cannot even eat alone... He needs someone to take his food to his mouth! The problem is, and always will be his attitude.

6.9 COURAGE TO ACHIEVE

"Lazy people will never have money,
but aggressive people will get rich."

Proverbs 11:16

What needs the lazy? Aggressiveness, strength, courage... Courage to achieve, win, do... However, he is afraid to move forward and asks: "What will others think of me?" But the diligent, even alone, is in the majority! "One person with courage is a majority" (John C. Maxwell).

The lazy man speaks and never does. The diligent does and never speaks! The diligent says: "Lights, camera, action", and acts. The lazy man thinks: "Action, camera, lights?" and doesn't move. "The lazy man wants and does not want" (Grynaeus 54). So he never achieves what he needs, because he never does anything about it.

The sluggard does not dare to cross the "bridge" (probably, he is afraid that the bridge can fall). But the Diligent says: "Even if the bridge falls, I will swim!" His motto is: "Action, action, action". "The fortune protects the daring man; the fearful man is a stumbling block to himself" (Virgil). The fearful men surrender, the brave men conquer. Don't be afraid of making mistakes: the victory belongs to the bold! Fear leads to stagnation, courage leads to progress.

The difference between the Lazy and the Diligent never has to do with the reality in itself, but with the different way of seeing reality. What you are will influence the way you see. The lazy sees the glass half empty; but the diligent sees the glass half full, and if needs to, he fills it even more... He says: "I will persist until I succeed. Always will I take another step. If that is of no avail I will take another, and yet another" (Og Mandino).

For the diligent the question about doing or not a task is: Yes? No? But for the Lazy is: Yes? No! The difference is a point, but a point makes all the difference! The lazy just feels good to do one thing: Do nothing. And

the result of both will be completely opposite. "The formula for disaster is: Could + Should + Won't" (Jim Rohn).

6.10 DOMINATE OR BE DOMINATED

"Hard work will give you power;
being lazy will make you a slave."

Proverbs 12:24

The diligent (or hard worker) has power and dominates everything. And what is the reason? "The diligence can more, and may very" (Grynaeus 92). The lazy man does not control anything, and neither wants to dominate! What will happen? Will end up being dominated to the point where it is considered a "victim" of their own destiny...

The truth is this: the lazy never takes control of anything. Thus, his life will be controlled (exactly the way that he does not like). Instead of controlling, it turns out to be controlled. Instead of dominating, turns out to be dominated. Instead of living the life he liked, he ends up living a life that hates.

Man was created to master (was not created to be dominated). We were created to master ourselves, our own life (we were not created to dominate each other). But the lazy man does not know its potential! "The soul of a free

man looks at life as a series of problems to be solved and solves them, while the soul of a slave whines: *What can I do who am but a slave?*" (George S. Clason).

We all have the ability to master, be brave and diligent. But we also have the possibility of being lazy, without attitude, and remain in inaction. The decision to walk in diligence or fall asleep in laziness: is and always will be ours.

6.11 SERVE THE KINGS

"Show me someone who does a good job,
and I will show you someone who is better than most
and worthy of the company of kings."

Proverbs 22:29

What happens to someone who is diligent? What happens to someone who does a good job? This person may be at the service of kings! "True diligence will make a person the most valued employee in any workplace" (Steven K. Scott). The diligent person is like a light that shines in the dark, and that becomes a valuable help for others.

Did you know that we all have at least one gift that distinguishes us among ten thousand people? Yes, you have a special gift. And, what to do? Work to find out what is

your greatest talent. Notice what you do naturally well (above average). Normally, when you receive more praise? Invest in your strengths. Put your focus on what gives you greater return. "When we work with the gifts we have, we are much more efficient" (John C. Maxwell).

We must do what we do well and distinguishes us from others. We should not try to imitate or be like the others. We need to know ourselves. If you discover what makes you unique, you will be in advantage. As much as you try to be good in a weak area, at best, you can become "mediocre", or even perhaps "median". Who all wants, nothing reaches. As the proverb says "Apprentice of many crafts will not master any of them". But if you invest in what you are naturally good, you can get to the top! The formula is: $t + t = T$ (talent + task = Top).

We cannot delude ourselves with the simple activism. "Activity is not necessarily accomplishment" (John C. Maxwell). Do you know the formula of accomplishment? Action + purpose = Accomplishment. And your purpose has to do with your specific gifts, your personal vocation. If you let yourself be guided by your purpose, you will have happiness and self-fulfillment. The purpose is man's compass.

Even the lazy has phenomenal qualities that would put him in prominence among thousands. But as he will know who has these qualities, if he never puts into practice?

It's not enough he has the talent; he needs to put into practice. A talent is like a seed: It's not enough to have the seed; it's necessary to sow it! Our life can be compared to a seed: We may think that we are small and insignificant... But when we start to action, the incredible happens... And the fruits begin finally to emerge.

But everything in its time. There is a process to be followed. Its not, and never will be something instantaneous. "We grow daily, not in a day" (John C. Maxwell). It takes talent, commitment, work, continuity and persistence to succeed. And: not only to succeed, but also to maintain it.

6.12 THE SOURCE OF WEALTH

"Look after your sheep and cattle as carefully as you can,
because wealth is not permanent.

Not even nations last forever."

Proverbs 27:23-24

Finally, Solomon encourages us to know the state of our sheep and cattle, that is, of our own work. Again, the Wise shows us the importance of focusing on the work and not on wealth or luck. "Luck corresponds to the work" (Rezende, 4788).

What is the source of wealth? The work. And when wealth ends? When the work ends. Work is as a source from which flow the wealth; or as a tree where the precious fruits are harvested.

Solomon says that riches are not forever, nor crowns (positions of power) are transmitted indefinitely (nations don't last forever). Because when the source dries, also the waters cease to flow. When the tree is cut, also the fruits cease. "Without intelligence, work, domestic and civil virtues, the wealth will not be achieved or will be lost in a short time" (Marquês de Maricá).

What does this teach? Our eyes must always be put on the work, which is the source of all wealth. And for one who is diligent in his work, there will always be fruit in abundance. "Growth is the result that is achieved after much hard work" (John C. Maxwell).

In this sense, we need to take pleasure in our own work; we need to take pleasure in cultivating our land; and walk towards the achievement of our dreams; taking the first and the last step; having the initiative and finalizing; wishing and also reaching; rolling up our sleeves, and doing what needs to be done. The natural consequence of all this is: Abundance that never ceases... Constant diligence, abundant wealth!

6.13 LESSONS OF WISDOM

Walk forward, even without knowing the way.

Walk with perseverance to reach the goal.

Be diligent, zealous, careful, applied, active, agile.

Think of every action like a good seed planted in the ground.

Don't exchange responsibility for futility.

Keep your priorities.

Don't believe that success is easy.

Put the focus on the work.

Do what you should and not what you want.

Get out of your comfort zone and go to fight.

Set your goals, and think of strategies to achieve those goals.

Be active, always take the initiative and not wait for things to happen.

Take another step, and if not enough, take another step and another still.

SECRET 7

THE TRAP OF MISERY

7.1 THE FIRST STEP

"No one can attain wisdom
without first going through the folly!"

Seneca

What is the first step to failure? Not take any step! Sometimes we get so afraid of making mistakes that we end up doing nothing at all. And without us realizing it, this is the main reason for our failure. The fear of failure is an impediment to real learning. Who is not willing to make mistakes, is also not willing to learn. "Never feel shame for trying and failing for he who has never failed is he who has never tried... Only a worm is free from the worry of stumbling" (Og Mandino).

Someone will think: "But is not better not take a step, than to give the wrong step". Yes, it's true. But if a man stays with this constant doubt in his mind, he will

never do something. "Every master was once a disaster" (T. Harv Eker).

If we look at History, we see that all great achievements and discoveries to scientific and technological level are mainly due to the numerous failed attempts of scientists and researchers. Thomas Edison, for example, to create the electric lamp has failed more than a thousand experiments. In other words, more than a thousand failures to be finally winner!

Remember: "Green grass grows where dry desert ends" (Og Mandino). Are we willing to go through this wilderness? Or we just have resistance to day hikes? Success is not achieved in one day, is a long journey full of dangers and failures... and only reaches the goal, those who are persistent! Only reaches the prize, one that reaches the goal. What does it take to reach the goal? Take a step at a time! The great achievements are made of small steps.

Persistence takes you where you want. Who will persist? The winners. Who will give up? The losers. If we give up in the first failed attempt, what will happen? We will have no chance to succeed. We'll walk in circles without getting anywhere... Who changes direction every day, always returns to the beginning!

Does the success is due to a rare moment of inspiration? In most cases, this will not happen. Most likely, and even healthy, is the success achieved through work and

continuous effort. Thomas Edison once said: "Genius is one percent inspiration, ninety nine percent perspiration".

7.2 THE DANGER OF INACTION

"Go ahead and be lazy;
sleep on, but you will go hungry."

Proverbs 19:15

What are the terrible effects of laziness? It makes us sleep deeply. And the problem is this: When we sleep, we can work? No. When we sleep, we can make money? Of course not. We are already seeing the negative consequences of laziness: Poverty. There is a Latin proverb that says precisely that: "Laziness is the key to poverty". We must reject this key, because it opens the wrong door!

Solomon states categorically that inaction (do nothing) makes us suffer hunger. Someone wants that? I think not. Therefore, we need to reject laziness. Laziness is a bad company that leads to the evil ways of misery! Laziness means "aversion to work; tendency of someone who does not want to work; negligence; indolence; inaction" (Dictionary).

Have you heard of the law of inertia? This law states: "All bodies are «lazy» and don't wish to change its state of motion: if the bodies are in motion, they want to

keep moving; if the bodies are not moving, don't wish to move. This «laziness» is called Inertia by physicists" (Wikipedia). That is, laziness is this initial inertia that we need to overcome. At first it is necessary to employ more force, but then becomes easier.

We must have courage to take the first step. Have you experienced bathe with cold water? Have you ever swam in a sea of ice water? In either case, the harder it is to take the first step. The hardest part is: feel the water for the first time. Pretty soon, water seems warmer. The most difficult is the first impact. And the only way to overcome laziness it's through boldness! Boldness is a gateway to success.

7.3 UNTIL WHEN?

"How long is the lazy man going to lie around?

When is he ever going to get up?

"I'll just take a short nap," he says;

"I'll fold my hands and rest a while." But while he sleeps,
poverty will attack him like an armed robber."

Proverbs 6:9-11

"How long, Lazy, you'll sleep?" Do you realize the power of laziness? It makes us sleep deeply. And when someone is sleeping, he does not like to be woken up!

"When did you, lift up out of bed?" says Solomon. "Ah, but I like so much..." says Lazy; "But, how long?" Solomon insists. "Until poverty and misery come to attack me..." mutters the Lazy!

Let no one think that laziness does not give pleasure, oh yes, gives great pleasure. Gives so much pleasure, like sleeping a nice nap! The problem is that its effects are quite harmful in people's lives. Man lives not only of sleep. "Few of us view ourselves as lazy. But the truth is, we all have the seeds of laziness within our nature. And if they are not dealt with, they will grow into a field that will undermine one or more aspects of our lives" (Steven K. Scott).

Theoretically humans spend a third of life sleeping (33.3%), but the Lazy has the "capacity" to sleep much more! He can sleep, even when he is awake. Sleeping is good... at night, but if someone does during the day... poverty will come knocking on his door to wake him abruptly! Surely, he will not like it... "No one prospers in idleness" (George S. Clason).

Laziness is good to entertain... Laziness tells us stories so we can sleep comfortably in his the arms! It seems that Laziness is our friend, our mother, who wants the best for us... But the purpose of Laziness, its very malicious! Laziness wants to make us sleep soundly, to leave us in misery... "Self-preservation has a tendency to lead to poverty" (Jim Rohn).

Its time to break relations with Laziness, and avoid any kind of closeness! We must not give in, not even for a second. We need to consider Laziness as a false friend... a real enemy!

7.4 SOWING AND HARVEST

"A farmer too lazy to plow his fields at the right time
will have nothing to harvest."

Proverbs 20:4

What the sloth does in us? It leads us to do nothing! Sloth paralyzes us; we stayed inactive, when we should be working! And when is the time to harvest, you know what we'll find? Nothing, absolutely nothing. And that leads us to what? Hunger and poverty.

If I did not sow at the right time, how can I harvest anything? I will reap what I did not sow? Will I receive the reward for a job I did not do? I can be very optimistic, but that's not likely to happen (if not impossible). The sluggard is considered himself smarter than the worker, however: "The indolent harms himself" (Seneca, *Epistulae Morales* 94.28).

This is the cruel reality of the pleasure of laziness: I feed me with the comfort of laziness; and laziness feeds with my misery! It's a perfect exchange of interests, but I'm

not interested in doing business with the laziness! The loans are small, but the interest is huge.

Its terrible result, ends up not compensate for the momentary pleasure. "It costs more work for many become miserable, than for others become fortunate" (Marquês de Maricá). All the pleasure and comfort of laziness, it's just a trap... Laziness wants to tie us to poverty forever!

7.5 THE CRAVING OF A SLUGGARD

"The craving of a sluggard will be the death of him,
because his hands refuse to work."

Proverbs 21:25 (NIV)

Do you see the relationship between: desire and sluggard? Laziness deceives us with desires... and makes us believe that these desires lead to happiness! But it is exactly the opposite: laziness leads to death. Laziness is one of the greatest illusionists that secure people to misery, we must not let ourselves be deceived... "Economic disaster begins with a philosophy of doing less and wanting more" (Jim Rohn).

How laziness contaminates a person? Laziness distorts our perspective: what is bad becomes good, and what is good becomes bad! Have you noticed that for the lazy all work is bad? "The sluggard makes only one

commitment: to his leisure. He'll try any excuse to shy away from honest labor" (John C. Maxwell).

However, the work is really bad? Its true that all work always requires some kind of effort. But it's not through work that we get the support to live? Where does the money come from? The food? The house? The clothes? The well-being? And even the self-fulfillment? All this comes from work. "Much is lost for lack of intelligence; however, much more is lost through laziness and aversion to work" (Marquês de Maricá).

If the work is bad, is the same as to be saying: "I don't want money, I want to be hungry, I want to live on the street; I not want to have clothes to wear, I want to spend cold and all kinds of needs; and I want to be a authentic frustrated!" Have you ever heard someone talk like that? I never...

However, we hear or say phrases like: "I have no desire to work today... If I win the lottery I stop working... Who was the unfortunate who invented the work... I don't like to do anything... I hate Mondays... I would like to be on vacation forever..." But you know: the one that does not have a job, never have vacation! "No work to do is bad for any man" (George S. Clason).

The fact is that our work should be valued and seen as something good and source of profit. And not as a curse! What happens when we see work as something good? We

work with more pleasure and dedication, and our productivity is much higher! But why doesn't this happen? The problem is laziness that blinds our eyes... and makes us sleep in passivity... And when finally we awaken... may be late!

7.6 POVERTY AND MISERY

"I walked through the fields and vineyards
of a lazy, stupid person.

They were full of thorn bushes and overgrown with weeds.

The stone wall around them had fallen down.

I looked at this, thought about it,
and learned a lesson from it:

Go ahead and take your nap; go ahead and sleep.

Fold your hands and rest awhile, but while you are asleep,
poverty will attack you like an armed robber."

Proverbs 24:30-34

Solomon calls the lazy "foolish" (or stupid person). Laziness is nonsense. What characterizes someone foolish or insensate? It's a person who has no sense, that is, has no sensitivity to grasp the moment. And this can be tragic. "Laziness consumes life like rust consumes iron" (Marquês de Maricá). What is the importance of the senses? For example, our body has various sense organs, whose mission

is to transmit sensory information. Each sense organ is responsible for a specific sensitivity (eg, the five senses: sight, hearing, smell, taste, touch). These sensory organs are vital, and sometimes alert us to things that are wrong.

Suppose someone is cooking and unwittingly puts his hand over the fire, what happens? The moment he feels that the fire is burning the skin, it has the immediate instinct to divert the hand of fire. It's something instant. He did not even need to think: "Well, the fire in direct contact with my skin will cause a burn and will damage my health... So I will withdraw my hand, now". This does not happen because the person has the sensitivity to feel the pain caused by fire; and will immediately divert hand. Now imagine that this person had a disease that affects the touch, and has no skin sensitivity to feel the fire, what would happen? The person would remain more time with his hand on fire, without realizing, and the burn would be much more serious!

With a simple example, we see the importance of sensitivity. And laziness, what does? Laziness takes away the sensitivity for us to work! The lazy never realizes the need to work, and remains in inaction... What is the result? Carelessness, negligence, indifference, distraction, forgetfulness, error... Poverty and misery! "Laziness walks so slowly, that poverty easily reaches him" (Confucius).

We need to reflect as Solomon, and extract lessons of wisdom. Laziness can be a huge obstacle to wealth, and a large door to disgrace! We must completely reject the darkness and sleepiness of laziness, for us to see life differently. In fact when we do that, our eyes are opened... and finally begin to contemplate new horizons!

Finally, we will learn from one of the smallest beings that exist, but it can become one of our greatest teachers: The Ant! "Lazy people should learn a lesson from the way ants live" (Solomon, Pr. 6:6). And what ants do? They have:

“Attitude of Initiative: Ants don’t need a commander to tell them what to do.

Nature of Integrity: Ants work faithfully and need no outside accountability to keep them doing right.

Thirst for Industry: Ants work hard and will replace their anthill when it gets ruined.

Source of Insight: Ants store provision in the summer.” (John C. Maxwell).

Simple but wise. Follow the example of the great master Ant, and you will prosper!

7.7 LESSONS OF WISDOM

Do not stand still, nor have afraid of making mistakes.

Reject all laziness, aversion to work, and inaction.

Have the audacity to take the first step and overcome the initial inertia.

Reject the "pleasures" of laziness, and accept with pleasure the "pains" of work.

Recognize that work is good and is a source of profit.

Work diligently and joyfully.

Be enterprising, responsible, industrious, persistent and prudent.

SECRET 8

SEED FOR GROWTH

8.1 PROSPERITY OF GIVING

"The absence of love is the greatest poverty."

Mother Teresa of Calcutta

When we study the prosperity laws of King Solomon, we realize that these laws are contrary to the thinking of most people. Indeed, a world with the mentality of Solomon would be a very different world! It would certainly be a happier world, a world with more solidarity, and also a more prosperous world. Our goal would be not only our happiness but also the happiness of others! Have you noticed that "the entire population of the world - with one minor exception - is composed of others" (John C. Maxwell). Our greatest reward is serving others.

I don't believe that Solomon was more special than others. In my view, all human beings are special: not for what they do, but for what they are. You are special, I'm special, we are all special. What is the difference? The

difference is what we do. And in that sense, I have one certainty: If we follow the steps of Solomon, we will arrive at the same destination. That is the purpose of this book: Learn, practice and live what Solomon lived (the good things, of course). He is one of the best examples we can follow to help us to triumph (regardless of our area). All Solomon's secrets are universal, so it can apply to anyone, in any situation.

One of the most common advices we received in the financial area has to do with the savings. That is: "the best way to accumulate money is economize it"; "the profit are in the savings", some might say; "whoso keepeth, has it", say others. All this advice are extremely important, and help us to wisely manage our money. However, there are very few financial advices about the prosperity of giving!

We are so used to hearing these phrases: "In this world, no one gives anything to anyone", "it's every man for himself", or "we are in crisis," "there is no money", etc. What is the consequence of this kind of thinking? A natural tendency to avarice. "Somebody says, "Well, I can't be concerned about other people. About the best I can do is to take care of myself" Well, then you will always be poor" (Jim Rohn).

With this kind of mentality: "Giving is something negative, because it means losing what we have". And who knows: "If you ever need help, perhaps, you have no one to

help you". We are not trained to believe in abundance, but we are trained to fear the shortage. And what will be the result? Shortage. "Sometimes we hold on to our possessions because we fear we might run out – life seems scarce. But when we believe that giving is the way to live, we will produce more in the future – life seems abundant" (John C. Maxwell).

We will always be attracted to what we believe or attracted to what we fear. The evil that we fear, happens; And equally: the good that we believe, also happens. As once said the Master of Masters: "Don't be afraid, only believe" (Jesus, in Mark 5:36). If we want to thrive: We should not live with fear of something negative, but with faith in something positive.

8.2 GIVE WITH GENEROSITY

"One person gives freely, yet gains even more;
another withholds unduly, but comes to poverty."

Proverbs 11:24

Solomon makes a fantastic revelation: Giving is the natural way to receive. "Only by giving are you able to receive more than you already have" (Jim Rohn). It seems that whoever gives loses. But in reality, who gives, receives more. How does this happen? To better understand, let's do

an illustration: What happens when a seed is planted in the ground? Will germinate, take root, grow to become a tree, bear fruit, and more seeds, more trees and more fruit... You see the potential of a single seed?

Now imagine that the farmer is so fond of his "seed" that never sown in the ground with fear of losing it... It sounds ridiculous, but that's what happens to many people financially. They are so attached to their "seeds" that are afraid of losing, and so never get to multiply. The money then is like a seed? Yes. Money can multiply? Yes. How? Sowing correctly.

It's very good save money and not spend incorrectly. But it's also good to know invest it in order to multiply it. What will happen to a farmer if he did not plant their seeds? The seeds remain equal (There are some who do not even have seeds, why? They ate the seed rather than sow!). But what happens if the farmer plants the seeds? He will reap the fruits, and get more seeds to sow.

What we prefer: Give generously, and enrich? Or, economize too much, and impoverish? We are motivated by hope or fear? We are attracting prosperity into our lives, or poverty? The seeds are in our hands (with their full potential); but the decision to plant them or not, is ours.

Often, we consider the "rich" as someone greedy and avaricious. I think, as with everything, we cannot generalize. But one thing I know: Generosity is a source of

wealth. You must have noticed how some people have so much wealth and generosity at the same time? I do not think it is by chance, generosity is undoubtedly a great principle of growth. I love this definition of generosity: "The quality that receives more than it gives" (Steven K. Scott).

Almost everybody knows this saying: "Every one reaps what he sows". It's usually applied when someone makes something wrong. But why not apply it to the money? "Every one reaps the money he sows", why not? Solomon thought so.

8.3 GENEROSITY = PROSPERITY

"Be generous, and you will be prosperous.

Help others, and you will be helped."

Proverbs 11:25

What does it mean to be generous? It means being "noble; educated; illustrious; with lofty sentiments; with character; good; friend of giving; sensitive; strong; person of value" (Dictionary).

In the words of Solomon, a generous man is he who gives much. And what will be the consequence? It will thrive. That is, a generous man will receive in abundance. We will always receive in proportion to what we give. Nothing more, nothing less. But we cannot forget the

following: As in agriculture, every seed has its own time to bear fruit. We cannot sow today, thinking reap tomorrow. All financial investor must be patient, as well as a farmer is patient.

There will always be the time of sowing, and the time of harvest. Who never sows, never reap. He who sows little, reap sparingly. Who sows regularly, regularly will reap. He who sows much, will reap much. And who never ceases to sow, also never ceases to reap.

This is the relation of generosity with wealth. Solomon says that generosity is a wealth seed. The more we give, the more we receive. And the more we receive, the more we can give. And the more we can give, the greater our ability to receive... It's the prosperity cycle. We sow generosity, and we reap wealth. This is the agricultural-financial policy of Solomon!

We should not think small, because we become what we think. If you think like a rich person, you will give generously as a rich person. And later or earlier, you will live like a rich person. Start being generous today, if you want to thrive tomorrow. "You cannot be generous in abundance, if you are not generous in shortages" (John C. Maxwell). Listen to the advice of Jim Rohn: "It's best to start the discipline of generosity when the amounts are small. It's easy to give ten cents out of a dollar; it's a little harder to give a hundred thousand out of a million".

And generosity is not just about money, we can be generous in many ways: "You don't have to wait until you're rich to become generous. You can be generous with your time, your kindness, your words of encouragement, your labor, and whatever money or material possessions you have" (Steven K. Scott).

Perhaps, you look at yourself, and just see a tiny seed. But never forget: A seed is never what it can be. Your life is also like a simple seed... You are not yet what you can become! However, you already have the full potential within. If you start to believe and to act as such, the incredible transformation will begin to happen.

8.4 BE GENEROUS

"Be generous and share your food with the poor.

You will be blessed for it."

Proverbs 22:9

What does it mean to be generous? It means to share with the needy. You realize that there is here a mission? "The biggest advantage of the wealth is to provide materials for the charity" (Marquês de Maricá). There is a purpose for the prosperity that goes far beyond ourselves! Someone will say: "With so many poor people, how can I dare to be rich? It would be an injustice". And I ask: How can anyone dare

to help the poor, if he is also poor? There is a great purpose for prosperity: Helping others. I believe that every human being should be prosperous. And if someone already has prosperity, should help others prosper.

The point is not the rich become poor, but the poor become richer. What we need for this? Let's start with the most basic things, but we must not stop there. We must give them the "fish", yes; but we must also teach them to "fish"! And there will be enough fish for everyone? Certainly. "There is abundance for all" (George S. Clason). There is greater potential on this Earth than we imagine. We may grow more? Absolutely. Prosperity generates more prosperity. Thus, our prosperity increases with the prosperity of all.

However, the Nature has no interest only in our comfort, but especially in our learning. So if we want to enjoy its blessings, we need to obey its laws. Do not expect life to be easy; life can be very difficult for those who reject its teachings. But also can have many blessings to those who follow his laws. That is why we must learn from life, learn from each experience, from our mistakes, listen to the advice of the wise... If we do, we will be able to enjoy the happiness (even in the midst of difficulties).

If everyone was generous, everyone would be blessed. The more you do good to others, the better you're doing yourself. If you start to share, you will begin to

receive. Do you know these words of Jesus: "There is more happiness in giving than in receiving" (Acts 20:35). This happiness is not just something moral, or the pleasure of giving, but also something quite practical: He who receives only has what he received; but he who gives will receive multiplied! So is happiest who gives, because also the reward is greater. The donor will always receive more than the receiver! "Giving is better than receiving because giving starts the receiving process" (Jim Rohn).

Which side you want to be? On the side of receivers or donors? Would you rather have a piece of "fruit," or have a "tree" with lots of fruits? Would you rather enjoy just a moment, or use whenever you want? Would you rather have little or much to give? Do you believe or not in the law of generosity? Practice this law, and you will see how it works.

8.5 A GOOD INVESTMENT

"Give to the poor and you will never be in need.

If you close your eyes to the poor,
many people will curse you."

Proverbs 28:27

Who gives, loses? No. According to Solomon, will have everything he needs. But what happens to the one who

refuses to help? Many people will curse him. But why does this happen? It just happens. And will never change. Although we do not agree, we need to adapt ourselves. If we want to prosper, we need to change.

"And if I help someone who is ungrateful?" Our only concern should be to do our part. "Be benefactors, even with the risk of making an ungrateful; Genuine charity, has no need for gratitude" (Marquês de Maricá). When you help, you will always be rewarded (independently of what makes the other person).

"And if a beggar asking me money for food, then spend on drugs... In this case, give money is not harmful?" Each of us is responsible solely for our own actions. When you help a beggar with money, supposedly for him to eat: Believe me, you are already blessed (regardless of what the beggar do with that money). We should not be afraid of being deceived: Because when we help others, we are helping us! "He that hath mercy on wretched, is thinking of himself" (Publilius Syrus).

Evil is with those who practice it. When someone asks for help and is lying, he is only harming himself. But when someone helps generously (even if he is being deceived), he will always be blessed (the reward will be greater than the donation). "What you give becomes an investment that will return to you multiplied at some point in the future" (Jim Rohn).

When will you receive? Can be (or not) the next day, it may be (or not) in the next week, month or year... but you will receive. And we must never forget the following: The reward does not come from people we help, but it comes in other ways. You will never reap the very seed that you planted; in the same way, your reward will always be greater and will return to you differently.

8.6 KINDNESS IS HAPPINESS

"If you want to be happy, be kind to the poor;
it is a sin to despise anyone."

Proverbs 14:21

Some will say: "But there are so many charities to help the needy..." Well, I'd rather be part of sowing so that I too may participate in the harvest. "Others can give..." Okay, but I want to do it too. Or rather, I need to do it, if I want to multiply. "By being generous with the poor, we do not give only to them or to God, but to ourselves." (Albertan of Brescia, Sermo Secundus).

"But we are not giving out of interest? Thinking about receiving?" I would not say it is a matter of interest, but a matter of intelligence! You work out of interest? Yes, otherwise you would not work. But you're a selfish, because

you do not work for free? Of course not. As much as you like to work, you need bread to live!

With the act of giving is equal. As much as I like to help those in need, I need bread to live. For as the work brings rewards, the act of giving too. Thus, I do not practice generosity only because I like; but also because I need to do it to multiply in some way. This is how it works. "Generosity is one of the most admired attributes that an individual can display... but the admiration and appreciation are not the only benefits of generosity. In addition to the sincere joy we feel when we satisfy the needs of others, Solomon says that whoever is generous: will lack nothing - every his need will be met - and at the same time, he will thrive, and its prosperity will always increase" (Steven K. Scott).

The next time you see a person in need of help, think twice before saying "No". You have a great investment opportunity ahead. And if you do it as a lifestyle, get ready to live in abundance.

8.7 DEPOSIT OF GENEROSITY

"Riches profit not in the day of wrath,
but charitable giving delivereth from death."

Proverbs 11:4 (OJB)

All humans make mistakes, and all the mistakes have consequences. But Solomon teaches us something very important about generosity: When we treat others with mercy, also we will be treated with mercy. On the day of wrath or punishment (consequences of our mistakes), no matter how rich a person is, its many riches are useless. But you know what can make a difference? The generosity that we use with others.

Yes, Solomon says that “charitable giving” (“alms” in BPT09 translation) can free a person from death. In other words, generosity has a dual benefit: help grow financially, and protect from possible errors in the future. "The charity does not diminish wealth; on the contrary, the alms promote, and sanctify the wealth." (Marquês de Maricá).

We should all have a good deposit of generosity, because it represents prosperity and protection. Be generous with others, and others will be generous with you. Let us remember the words of the Son of God: "Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy... Do not judge, and you will not be judged" (NIV Matthew 5:7, Luke 6:37). Always forgive. And one day, if you sin, you'll also be forgiven.

When you bless someone who does not deserve to be blessed; in the future, even though you do not deserve it, you will be blessed. In this sense, we should never judge others with our mind. But, think of them with the heart.

With the mind, we should judge ourselves. But for others, we must think with the heart. In doing so, we will always have enough generosity to offer.

Og Mandino, author of "The Greatest Salesman in the World", uttered a great truth: "Wealth, my son, should never be your goal in life... True wealth is of the heart, not of the purse". The size of your heart will determine the size of your wealth. "The real wealth is in the soul and not in material goods" (Seneca).

8.8 FRIEND OF THE POOR

"If you get rich by charging interest
and taking advantage of people,
your wealth will go to someone who is kind to the poor."

Proverbs 28:8

Who is friend of the poor is a friend of wealth. But the enemy of the poor, will see their wealth to escape from their hands. And where will the wealth? For one who is a friend of the poor! "Good leaders express concern for the poor; bad leaders reflect no compassion for anyone" (John C. Maxwell). You understand the importance of generosity? The wealth will never come to you by chance, there is always a purpose. What is the purpose? Help the needy.

And if someone does not help the needy, having the opportunity in the hands? Their prosperity will go to those who are prepared. If you have a heart to help, then get ready to receive because the opportunity will arise. "Sharing makes you bigger than you are. The more you pour out, the more life will be able to pour in" (Jim Rohn).

The more you add value to others, the more value will be added to you. Decide to be a generous person. If you invest properly, you may have a bumper crop. However, you should not put your focus on receiving but in giving (because the goal is to persevere and grow continuously). Consider the following steps, advised by John Maxwell, to cultivate generosity in your life:

1. "Be grateful for whatever you have.
2. Put people first.
3. Don't allow greed to control you.
4. Regard money as a resource.
5. Develop the habit of giving."

8.9 LESSONS OF WISDOM

Believe in abundance and don't have fear of scarcity.

Multiply the money by giving generously.

Helping the needy: give the "fish", and teach to "fish".

Do what is your responsibility without fear of being "cheated".

View a plea for help, as an investment opportunity.

Show mercy to others, and increase your "bank account" of generosity.

Be a friend of the poor and needy, and help with joy.

Put people first, and concentrate on serving.

Be grateful for all things, and reject greed.

Consider the money as a resource, and practice the habit of making donations and offerings.

SECRET 9

ENEMIES OF PROSPERITY

9.1 MOMENTARY PLEASURE

"If you choose the pleasure:
you must be aware that behind him
there is someone who will only bring you
troubles and regret."

Leonardo da Vinci

How do we define something good? Something that gives us pleasure? We need to be careful. There are many things in life that provide momentary pleasure, and that ultimately lead people to misery! Solomon warns us repeatedly: "There is a way that appears to be right, but in the end it leads to death" (Proverbs 14:12 NIV).

We should never judge something good, only because we receive pleasure. What's really good? Let me tell you this: Only what gives lasting pleasure is truly good. "But if it's that simple, why everybody does not prefer that?" Mainly because the momentary pleasure requires no

waiting time, it is an immediate enjoyment. On the other hand, the lasting pleasure works exactly the opposite: It requires pain and sacrifice in the beginning, but in the end gives pleasure and rest. "If you forget the ultimate, you will become a slave to the immediate" (John C. Maxwell).

What happens often is that people opt for the enjoyment of the moment, because do not want to sacrifice at the beginning. What they do not realize is that at the end: the negative consequences will be far greater than the small initial effort (if they had made the right choice). For those who choose the immediate pleasure, it may seem the smartest choice, but in reality, this is the choice most foolish and hasty. "The virtues are bitter-sweet; but the vices are sweet-bitter" (Marquês de Maricá).

To be winners, we need to have a broader vision. I.e. we can not just look at the pleasures so appetizing that are offered to us, but we should realize the "trap"! The momentary pleasure can function as bait. What happens on the fishing? The bait is put on the tip of the hook, which is cast into the sea... when the fish sees the bait appetizing, tries to eat it immediately... and gets caught on the hook. In the end, instead of eating... the poor fish is going to be eaten! "Before any apparent benefit, you should stop with suspicion and caution. Also the hunt or fish are deceived by false hopes. You judge which are blessings given by fate? Are traps! Anyone who wishes to live a safe life should

avoid these fleeting benefits that deceive us: When we think we have these benefits, we let ourselves grab!" (Seneca).

That's how it happens repeatedly with momentary pleasures (which are also called "temptations"). We bite the bait and were soon stuck in the "hook". We can have the best of intentions, seeking our own pleasure, but in the end there will be only anguish and pain! "Avarice promises the possession of wealth; the debauchery seduces with the most diverse species of pleasure; the ambition attracts... The vices are tempting by offering payment in return; in private life, you must give up the salary" (Seneca).

9.2 PLEASURES AND POVERTY

"Whoever loves pleasure will become poor;
whoever loves wine and olive oil will never be rich."

Proverbs 21:17 (NIV)

Do you understand the process? "Whoever loves pleasure" (in other words: the one who bites the bait, the one who falls into the trap), "will become poor". It is a sad ending, but it is the harsh reality! We cannot delude ourselves with tasty baits. These baits can be a delight for the palate, but when they are ingested will cause death. Do not be fooled by the sweet song of the Sirens!

It is so important to learn to thrive as it is important to learn not to ruin. Did you know that a lot of people know thrive, and also destroy? Their life is like a "roller coaster", made of ups and downs: Yesterday, well; today, very bad; Tomorrow is better; the day after tomorrow, worse... But is not that kind of prosperity "yo-yo", which Solomon wants to teach us. He wants to take us to the top of a firm mountain, where there are countless riches, beautiful gardens and indescribable landscapes, happiness and lasting joy!

Solomon says: "whoever loves wine and olive oil will never be rich". What does he mean by that? What's wrong with liking to drink wine (in moderation)? What's wrong with liking to eat good olive oil (or rich food)? When Solomon speaks of love wine and olive oil, it is talking about an excessive admiration, love and an uncontrollable passion, a total dependence... Maybe he wants to refer to the luxuries and vices.

What does an addiction? Vices mean "habits to proceed evil; reprehensible customs; customs of little importance; harmful habits; excesses; defects; indecent actions that are practiced by habit" (Dictionary). And as Marquês de Maricá said: "Virtues enrich; vices impoverish".

Almost everything in life can be good and bad at the same time. "Vices are not in things; vices are in the soul"

(Seneca). For example, the food is good or bad? The food is good (without food, we died). However, too much food causes obesity and a number of diseases... that ultimately may lead to premature death.

And as we talk about food, we can talk about other things: wine, work, games, shopping, sun exposure, television, internet... All that is in excess or that creates some kind of dependency, and becomes an addiction is harmful. And will negatively affect other things such as: time, priorities, work, health, family... and money. "Good habits are the key to all success. Bad habits are the unlocked door to failure" (Og Mandino).

Therefore, we should avoid these two things: idleness and loneliness. There is a proverb that says: "Idleness is the mother of all vices". How can we avoid idleness? Through constant occupation of good things. "Only a habit can subdue another habit" (Og Mandino). And how can we avoid loneliness? Listen to the advice of Seneca: "I'll be satisfied if you act like you're being watched; since loneliness is counselor of all vices". Even when we're just us, we must act as if we were not alone!

And if anyone knows that something is harmful to his health, why he still wants? Simply because he still loves it! "The vicious man loves his enemies, because he loves his own vices" (Marquês de Maricá). So Solomon says: "Whoever loves vices and pleasures... will never be rich".

It's completely impossible. We can never address ourselves to two opposite directions at once. Or we turned toward the good habits and prosperity, or toward the pleasures and poverty... So says the wise Seneca about those who love the vices and pleasures: "Instead of enjoying, become slaves of pleasure; and, to cap the misery, they end up loving the very thing that makes them miserable".

9.3 WISDOM OR LUST

"A man who loves wisdom brings joy to his father,
but a companion of prostitutes squanders his wealth."

Proverbs 29:3 (NIV)

Now we see the two roads exposed by Solomon: On the one hand we have the way of wisdom, and on the other, the path of lust. One leads to the joy, the other path leads to poverty. Solomon said: "It is foolish to enjoy doing wrong. Intelligent people take pleasure in wisdom." (Pr. 10:23). Two paths with two completely different destinations. "The virtues cost little; but the vices are expensive" (Marquês de Maricá).

Which way will you follow? Its not necessary to answer because I know: You will follow the path you love most! If you love wisdom, you follow the wisdom. But if you love lust, you will follow lust.

The King David, Solomon's father, taught him: "Let your heart retain my words; Keep my commands, and live" (Pr. 4:4 NKJV). Why "retain his words" in the heart? Because what you love the most, determines how your life will be. And you know: How hard is our heart... We often want to control the heart, but it is him who controls us! "Master your passions so that your passions do not dominate you" (Publilius Syrus).

How can we change? Only by our decision. Your decisions may overlap to your emotions, if you so wish. Learn to say "No" to yourself. "All men are burdened with more desires than they can gratify" (George S. Clason). The problem is that some are waiting to feel the right thing, and then later do the right thing. And it does not happen like that. You feel the right thing, if you do the right thing. We should not be dependent on emotions; emotions will always be a consequence of our decisions. "More business leaders have sabotaged their careers from lack of discipline than by lack of cash flow" (John C. Maxwell).

Always put your decisions for the right things, first. Otherwise, you will not control your emotions, but will be controlled. And the end can be very painful. "What I need is: allay my fears; master the passions that excite; eliminate my mistakes; repressing my lust; annihilate my greed" (Seneca).

9.4 CONSEQUENCES OF IMMORALITY

"Keep to a path far from adulterous woman,
do not go near the door of her house,
lest you lose your honor to others
and your dignity to one who is cruel,
lest strangers feast on your wealth
and your toil enrich the house of another.
At the end of your life you will groan,
when your flesh and body are spent."

Proverbs 5:8-11

When Solomon speaks of adulterous women, in other words, he is talking about all illicit things. He forbids things, which are often a great temptation (as the saying goes: the forbidden fruit is the most coveted). "The vices insinuate more easily through pleasure" (Seneca).

Imagine a couple: What happens if one spouse has sex with someone else? This is the ruin of the marriage itself... When two people unite, they do it or should do it for love. There is a total consecration to the other person, a desire for eternal love, a mutual respect for the dignity of the other. But when a betrayal happens, what does that mean? Lack of love, respect and consideration... lies,

infidelity, corruption, lack of character. And nobody likes to be deceived, especially by the person who loves most.

But when someone falls into the temptation of betrayal, is not thinking about the ruin of his marriage, or the anguish and desolation of the other person, of children (if any), and the negative marks that will last forever... The person who cheats thinks only of pleasure and madness of the moment, but forgets that the unfortunate consequences will be permanent! "No enemy inflicts so hard knocks, as the blows that certain people suffer, caused by own pleasures" (Seneca).

However, Solomon does not refer only to relationships. We could put in the same category: all that causes momentary pleasure and permanent disgrace. What happens is a real exchange: If we choose the "vices", also we will give up our prosperity. Our wealth would be for others, and that would be cruel.

Marquês de Maricá said: "The worst slavery is the vices and passions... Wealth does not remain for a long time with the vicious". We need to see the big picture, instead of being focused on a pleasure point. The full image can bother us, and eventually remove from us the desire of greed. Instead of loving the small pleasure, we come to hate the great vice! What we need is a broader intelligence to invest in sustainable happiness. And everyone wins with this: ourselves, those around us, and the world in general.

9.5 CONTEMPT OF WISDOM

"And you will say, «Why would I never learn?

Why would I never let anyone correct me?

I wouldn't listen to my teachers. I paid no attention to them.

And suddenly I found myself publicly disgraced»."

Proverbs 5:12-14

As the saying goes: "A friend is one who warns you". But how often we like to hear warnings, reprimands and advice? Someone would say: "The advice is offered because it has no value; if it had value would be sold". Why do we tend to disregard the advice? Perhaps because: "It's easier to give good advice than to follow it" (John C. Maxwell). However, for Solomon, the wise counsel was extremely important. He said: "Who asks for advice, has wisdom... The wise man listens to advice... He who hates reproof is ignorant"

And why, someone gives us good advice and does not sell? Simply because: he loves us and wants the best for us. So the Wise advises us to hear our parents. Because normally, our parents are the people who love us more, and they want us always well (they would be able to even give their own lives for us)! Therefore, we must always listen to the advice of those who love us more. "If you do not give

honest advice to a person you love, of course, you hate him" (Publilius Syrus).

Although it is difficult for our ego, we must listen to others and pay attention to their advice. The more we listen to others, wiser we become. "Healthy leaders seek wise counsel, even if it's not what they want to hear" (John C. Maxwell). You know, what's the main door through which wisdom enters our lives? Are our ears! Listening is the first step to learn. Therefore it is said: "Knowledge speaks, but wisdom listens!" Maybe it's for this reason that we have two ears and only one mouth... "Wisdom does not come from within. Wisdom comes from sources outside of ourselves. Remember the benefits of seeking counsel" (Steven K. Scott).

What is the consequence of walking in wisdom? Victory and success. But for those who reject the wisdom constantly, there is only one destination: misery. No matter where we are, we want to continually grow? We need to learn continuously. When we stop learning, we stop growing too. And when we fail to grow, we begin to diminish... Remember the Learning Principle: "Each person we meet has the potential to teach us something" (John C. Maxwell).

Why many people after they have reached success, they stumble and fall? Somehow, at some point, these

people were deceived by some kind of bait... "Are our vices that lead us to despair" (Seneca).

We must keep ourselves awake. "Peace with enemies, war with the vices" (Rezende 4741). It is necessary to distrust and reject all kinds of harmful pleasures, for us to be able to achieve a firm and lasting happiness. A happiness that does not generate regret, but provides an increasing pleasure!

9.6 LESSONS OF WISDOM

Never judge something as being good just because it gives pleasure.

Be very careful with the immediate pleasure.

Hate all that is evil, objectionable, harmful and addictive.

Avoid idleness, and stay occupied with good things.

Avoid loneliness, and when you are alone, act like you were with someone.

Have fun with wisdom, not with evil.

Say 'no' to yourself, and put your decisions above your emotions.

Always hate the vices.

Continually think long-term; invest in sustainable happiness.

SECRET 10

GUIDE TO GREATNESS

10.1 THE SOLID BASE

"Humility is the solid foundation of all virtues."

Confucius

Our desire is to be a great person? We must be small. We want to grow? We must decrease. We want to win? We need to lose. It seems somewhat contradictory, but this is the principle of humility. The smaller you make, the higher you will be.

Humility is the biggest and best "elevator" that exists. In fact, it works as a boost: We do pressure down, and it lifts us up! "Put yourself always on the lowest rung, and will be given to you the highest" (Thomas a Kempis, *De Imitatione Christi* 2:10:17).

If you learn to use humility: it can act as a tremendous force. Humility can lead you to achieve anything you want. The more you practice humility, the greater the impact it will have on your life.

Humility is the way to victory. Sometimes we think that humility is a sign of weakness, but in fact, it is a great strength. Virtually everything we have achieved in life, and that is worthy of praise, is the result of true humility.

What is humility? This word is used incorrectly when it is associated with misery and poverty. However, true humility leads to greatness. What is? It does not refer to something outside but inside. It is a driving force. It's about the ability to become small, and later become great. Humility is the "virtue that gives us the awareness of our weakness, of our limitations; moderation; simplicity in the character; consideration; inferiority" (Dictionary).

If on the other hand: you consider yourself great, you will become small. How does this work? I do not know, but it works! Try it, and you will see. In fact, we all have the following experience: Whenever we are proud, we have vanity, we are presumptuous, or we put high expectations, what happens? We experience frustration, humiliation, shame, and disappointment. "Often we are humiliated, and we see our hopes and aspirations frustrated because they were exaggerated" (Marquês de Maricá). And when we are humble, what happens? We experience the victory, surprise, satisfaction, recognition, success!

We must learn to be humble people, if we want to win and succeed in all areas of life. We can always observe the following principle: The areas where we are more

humble, are also the areas where we are best. "The wise man humbles himself by experience, as well as the corn leans when mature" (Marquês de Maricá).

10.2 THE WAY TO GLORY

"Humility is the way to glory."

Proverbs 18:12 (BPT09)

Humility is a path that must be followed. Not a thought, a moment, an emotion... It is a process. Humility is the guide to glory. How many do not want to achieve glory? Well, it is humility that leads there. And moreover, the loss of humility also means the loss of glory. "The fall follows the petulance; the glory follows humility" (Manutius, Adagia 1269).

Have you ever watched someone successfully in an area, being interviewed on television? Easily we perceive the attitude of humility that he or she tries to express (regardless of success). Why? Consciously or unconsciously knows it was humility that led him to glory. And also knows that if loses humility, all will be lost. It is a fact. Just as humility leads to glory, lack of humility leads to fall. Seneca thus advised: "Put yourself in a humble position, where it is not possible you fall". Be humble always, and your life will be filled with glory.

What does glory? When the Master Solomon speaks of glory, he is talking about abundance, prosperity, honor, happiness, triumph, joy, abundance... A real “paradise”! Humility leads you there.

Why Solomon speaks of "the way"? Because in fact it is a journey. It is not just humility itself, but what humility can take you to accomplish. Humility is an excellent counselor; I would even say that humility is man's best friend. It leads us to work persistently, leads us to learning and constant improvement... leads us to conquest and victory! "Proper preparation is the key to our success" (George S. Clason).

Humility is a great teacher, capable of transforming our lives. However, it does not force anyone to stay in their "school", nor follow their advice. At any time, you can give up the humility and abandon it. At any time, you may think that humility is useless, or you can think you've learned everything that you had to learn. And that's where problems arise.

Humility is not a father or a mother, for you (as an adult) leave home... It is a partner for life! You always need humility if you want to have and keep the glory. "A gift may take a leader to the top, but humility enables him to endure" (John C. Maxwell).

10.3 HUMILITY AND HONOR

"You must be humbled before you can be honored."

"Humility will bring you honor."

Proverbs 15:33, 29:23 (ERV)

Humility always rewards us. It is like a "seed", and the honors are their "fruits". How many want to reap what they never planted? Each seed produces after its kind. If a farmer wants to pick apples: he must plant apple seeds. Even if he is a "man of faith" and with lots of enthusiasm, he cannot plant banana seeds believing that will pick apples.

What does this mean? We cannot wish to receive honors without ever planting "seeds" of humility. You want to be honored? Even if you say no, if you are humble you will be honored! "If you want to grow beyond yourself, remain humble and teachable" (John C. Maxwell). Do you know what is synonym of Humility? Honor. The antonym of Humility is Humiliation.

What does it mean to be honored? The honor can mean many things: triumph; success; rewards; praise; recognition; promotion... Sometimes we say with an apparent "humility": "I do not desire honor", but the truth is that this is just an excuse for our own lack of success.

Someone will say: "Honor is not the most important in life... There are many more important things... It may even be dangerous". Be honored may not even be the most

important, but also important. And the danger? The honor (in the broader sense) has never been dangerous, but the lack of honor is a danger! "The humble man cannot fall, nor with much danger" (Publilius Syrus).

When we observe someone successful, we should not be jealous, but we must see that person as an example to follow. "Successful people look at other successful people as a means to motivate themselves. They see other successful people as models to learn from" (T. Harv Eker). Or, if it comforts us, we can think as Marquês de Maricá: "We should not envy those who rise far above us: the fall of them will be much more painful than ours".

I do not believe that "they" are more important than us. For if we believe, all things are possible. If we believe in failure, this is what happens. But if we believe in success: this is what will happen! Life is a book, and we are the writers: We are the builders of our own destiny. What we believe will determine who we are. A man has the size of their faith. "If a hundred-foot oak tree had the mind of a human, it would only grow to be ten feet tall!" (T. Harv Eker).

There are no limits for those who do not limit themselves... We all have great potential. Humility is what makes the difference! Humility believes so strongly in us, to the point of wanting to lead us to glory. How? I do not know, but humility knows for sure! Let yourself be guided

by humility; and you will be a real success. With humility, everything can be achieved.

10.4 PROSPERITY, RESPECT AND LONG LIFE

"... Be humble, and you will get riches,
honor, and a long life."

Proverbs 22:4

Do you want prosperity and abundance in your life? You want to be appreciated and loved by others? Want a long life with happiness and success? Humility is the path to prosperity, respect and longevity. "Leaders who last are marked by humility" (John C. Maxwell).

Humility is an excellent teacher, capable of transforming the lousy students in excellent! Throughout history human, humility has had fantastic results. His plan is always, lead to glory all those who follow it: regardless of age, nationality, gender... Humility is no respecter of persons. Humility is the best teacher of man.

You know the proverb: "Tell me with whom you walk and I will tell you who you are"? Solomon might say: "Tell me if you walk with humility and I'll tell you if you are great". Someone will say: "I'm a very humble person", and you would tell him: "Boast not thyself of yourself".

From the moment someone considers himself "humble", ceased to be.

We can only fill a glass that is empty. Similarly, humility has to do with the act of emptying yourself to be filled. A person full of himself, cannot receive anything. But he who empties himself, is always ready to receive more. Humility is so. That's why I do not consider myself humble, but wish humility as the "bread" of each day.

It is very easy to say that we have "humility"... Well, it is available to everyone. But you know, it's not enough for us have humility, we need to listen humility! What is the difference between good and bad students in a class? They do not go to the same school? They do not have the same professors? And the same lessons? The real difference is not in what they receive, but on what they do with what they receive! Despite the same school, the same teachers, and the same classes who have, what they do is different. The concentration in class is different, the personal study at home is different, the preparation for the tests is different, the dedication in practical work is different... and this difference is that will make all the difference between good and bad students!

What we mean by this? We all have the same "School of Life", the same "Professor Humility" and access to their classes every day. But why do not we experience glory and honor? It has to do with our due attention to

Humility: listen to their advice; learn carefully; study their lessons; understand and put into practice its teachings...

We need to learn constantly with "Dr. Humility" and we must not miss their classes! They are very important. Humility will teach us and guide on the path to glory. Step by step, humility leads us to great achievements! If we do not abandon humility, the glory will never abandon us. In fact, success and honor become a constant in our lives.

Finally, consider the following poem about humility, written by Og Mandino:

"If I become overconfident I will recall my failures.

If I overindulge I will think of past hungers.

If I feel complacency I will remember my competition.

If I enjoy moments of greatness

I will remember moments of shame.

If I feel all-powerful I will try to stop the wind.

If I attain great wealth I will remember one unfed mouth.

If I become overly proud

I will remember a moment of weakness.

If I feel my skill is unmatched I will look at the stars."

(In "The Greatest Salesman in the World")

10.5 LESSONS OF WISDOM

See yourself as a little person.

Do not trust in exaggerated claims or high expectations.

Reduce yourself to a humble position, where it is not possible to fall.

Maintain humility in victory.

Work, learn and improve based on humility.

Never get jealous of someone successful; but see that person as an example to follow.

Do not consider yourself a "humble person".

Desire more and more humility as the "bread" of each day.

Whenever you have the temptation to aggrandize yourself, you must remind your limitations and failures.

SECRET 11

THE REASON FOR THE FALL

11.1 THE GREATEST ENEMY

"He that is proud eats up himself."

William Shakespeare

As humans, we have the natural tendency to blame others. But the truth is that we are responsible for our own failure. I dare even say: "We are the biggest obstacle to our own success!" It seems incredible, but it's a fact. Not worth spend our short lives fighting against each other, when our biggest enemy is us. "The biggest problem comes from thyself; You are responsible for harm yourself" (Seneca).

Our biggest challenge in life should be, overcome ourselves. When we do, we will have achieved the greatest feat of our lives: Defeating the biggest enemy, and be the biggest winner! The real question is not to defeat others, but ourselves. "But that does not seem to make sense, what should we win?" We must overcome our limitations and

weaknesses, our own nature... In fact, our greatest enemies are within us.

And one of those enemies, no doubt, is pride. Pride means: "exaggerated concept that someone does himself; exaltation of himself; haughtiness; distinction; brio; vanity; arrogance; something to be proud of" (Dictionary).

Pride can even present itself as a great friend in our lives; as the friend who defends us more! But actually, it is a great enemy. As laziness, pride is a great illusionist: Apparently, leads us to the mountaintop; but their purpose is to make us fall into the abyss! "Our pride lifts us; and then precipitate us from a higher place" (Marquês de Maricá).

It goes something like this: Pride deludes us saying that wants to lift us to the mountaintop, where we will have reached our peak. At the ridge, we will be larger than the others; and everyone will marvel prostrate towards us... But what will actually happen? Pride leads a person to the mountaintop? Yes! However, at the peak of the mountain there is a large cliff... and the intention of pride is: push into the abyss!

Pride is a real killer, and hates us. Pride will only be satisfied: when cause our fall, and consequent destruction. "Pride is such a cunning and implacable enemy that even when you know its destructive power, you can succumb to its seductive call" (Steven K. Scott).

11.2 FAILURE AND FALL

"Pride leads to destruction, and arrogance to downfall."

Proverbs 16:18

Our friend "pride" leads us to where? Failure. Pride is the tour guide of failure. We should never have it as a friend. We want to failure? Let us be proud. But if we want to win, we must learn to reject the Pride! "Our natural arrogance or pride is the instigator of more of our problems than any other source" (Steven K. Scott).

How many times, the proud man is seen as someone truly strong? But it is a big mistake. The proud man can even be compared to a big "raging bull", and later or sooner he will be "shot down"... "Proud people always lose" (John C. Maxwell).

Solomon says that before the fall, rises the human heart. It is a fact. We want to exalt us? If so, we must take a "parachute" with us, because we will fall... "Do not go up so high that the fall is fatal" (Marquês de Maricá). As the proverb says, "The higher you climb, the greater you fall". We should never elevate ourselves. "From the heights, it is more dangerous to fall" (Moore 304). If we keep our feet firmly on the ground, we will be safe.

Pride is a huge obstacle to success, and a big door for failure. If we want to be a failure, we just need to be

arrogant people. "But sometimes it is impossible for me not being arrogant..." But if we do not control the arrogance, how can we control the success? When we are in the "temptation" of being arrogant, we must remember: "Arrogance is a big trap." We cannot trust this treacherous springboard; because instead of making us go up, arrogance makes us fall... And the fall can hurt!

No one likes to fall, why? Usually people hurt themselves. And the greater the height of the drop, the greater the pain caused. We could also say: The greater the pride, the greater the failure. Have you noticed that when people speak arrogantly, their expectations never materialize? How many words, we released to the air and end up falling on us? Let's be careful, arrogance leads us always to the opposite place.

11.3 ASKING FOR TROUBLE

"To like sin is to like making trouble.

If you brag all the time, you are asking for trouble."

Proverbs 17:19

What happens to someone who brags? Attracts troubles. It's amazing, we did not learn this in school; We learned in real life. And unfortunately, with big falls!

"When we allow our pride to rule, painful humiliation usually follows" (Steven K. Scott).

The pride is the "seed" of ruin. Note that everything in life is the result of what someone built. And what is the purpose of boasting? Ruin everything that was built. And it's always easier to destroy something than to build something. What took years and years to be built, unfortunately, it can be destroyed in a short time.

The pride is a destructive virus; we must prevent its contagion. It may seem that makes us well when magnifies us; however, what actually happens is that attracts ruin! The pride promotes us in order to destroy us. It makes a fuss about us to the "thieves" who want to attack our lives. "Don't trust your own propaganda" (John C. Maxwell).

What we do with the things of value? We show for everybody? Or we ensure that we protect these things? When we strolled down the street, we see no gold or money in sight. Where people keep their money? At the bank, in the safe, in the wallet, on the mattress... etc. What for? So no one can steal! "But what does this have to do with boasting?" The pride discloses our value to all. And so, the "thieves" can steal what we have. "Make yourself small to not to be envied; Hatred often accompanies envy" (Marquês de Maricá). It is very wise on our part, humble ourselves to ourselves. To that others do not do it for us! When we

provoke envy in others, we are putting ourselves in the position of an "enemy to shoot down".

As laziness, vanity, arrogance and pride are our enemies. They hate us and want to lead us to ruin. We should learn from the painful experiences of others so we do not suffer the same: "I have lost millions of dollars and experienced agonizing personal and business failures because pride and arrogance colored my thinking... Unfortunately, the more money one makes, the more likely he is to become arrogant... He takes more risks. And when he falls, he falls hard" (Steven K. Scott).

11.4 ARROGANCE AND DOWNFALL

"Arrogance will bring your downfall."

"Arrogant people are on the way to ruin."

Proverbs 29:23, 18:12

Apparently, it seems that arrogance exalts us. But the truth is the opposite: Instead of exalting, humbles us. Or rather exalts us at first, and then will take us to the ultimate humiliation! "The glory of the proud soon turns into dishonor" (Publilius Syrus).

Christ spoke of this law as follows: "Those who make themselves great will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be made great" (Luke 18:14). It is a

true law of life, and as such will always work. When we magnify ourselves, later or sooner we will be humiliated. And often, when we have success it is that we should have greater precaution. Success is fertile ground for arrogance. "My home runs often resulted in arrogance, which led to the failures that followed" (Steven K. Scott). You see the cycle? 1- Humility, 2- Success, 3- Arrogance, 4- Ruin... "The fact is that we are wiser in adversity, while prosperity distances us from the right path" (Seneca).

Self-aggrandizing is the "seed" of humiliation and failure. If we do not want this, we must reject these seeds in our farm! In this sense, we should be careful with praise. Praise tends to magnify us and, consequently, leads us to fall. "Flattery, which corrupts good men, makes bad men worse" (Marquês de Maricá). "Don't be moved by flattery - Stay humble or you will stumble" (John C. Maxwell). Even if a praise is sincere, we must receive it with humility. We have nothing that we have not received first. And if we received, we must exalt the One who has given us.

The purpose of this lesson is to avoid the downfall. I do not think anyone wants to "go up" in life... and finish falling. Nor am I arguing that "one should not have courage to fly higher". What Solomon is transmitting us is that pride, arrogance and all the boasting are not elevations but great disintegrations. Are holes along the way to make us stumble and break into pieces.

And if we are to succeed, it is not enough just to know: who is on our side, and leads to prosperity? We also need to know: who are our enemies who want to prevent our progress? And even when we have achieved some sort of success, these enemies as pride desire our downfall. Therefore, we must be wise.

11.5 PROFIT OR SUFFERING

"If you are wise, it will be for your own profit;
If you are arrogant, you alone will suffer the consequences."

Proverbs 9:12 (BPT09)

Usually when we talk about arrogance, we consider it harmful to others. I.e. offends others and affect relationships negatively. However, the arrogant person will be the biggest victim of arrogance. As well as the proud person is the biggest victim of pride! "One of the biggest obstacles to the advance and promotion of people of great talent and great science is ordinarily his pride or presumption" (Marquês de Maricá).

"If you are arrogant", says Solomon, "you alone will suffer the consequences". I alone, only me, and nobody else... I can even use the arrogance as a V.M.A. (Verbal Martial Art) to try to offend others. However, what will happen is that I will hurt myself, with my own sword (or

rather "tongue"!)). I do not want to get into that battle... because I will be the loser. I'll be fighting against myself!

Never underestimate the destructive power of arrogance. "It has destroyed the lives of individuals, unraveled families, undermined corporations, and even caused the fall of entire nations" (Steven K. Scott). There is no advantage in being arrogant; on the contrary, there are only negative consequences. And if we want to maintain the success, we need to completely reject this self-destructive weapon. "Pride obscures the perspective of the leader and leads him to act illogically" (John C. Maxwell).

How to overcome the arrogance? Through respect. "Respect inhibits arrogance" (Seneca). Again, when we talk about respect, we always think of something that will benefit others. Everyone likes to be respected; and every human being deserves respect. However: a respectful person always wins more than the respected person. Respect works as a protection against ourselves! It represents a "sobriety" against the "drunkenness" of arrogance. What happens to a drunk person? Loses control, makes blunders, and harms himself...

"If you are wise", says Solomon, "it will be for your own profit". Again, the Master warns: The only harmed or benefited, with our arrogance or wisdom, are ourselves. You cannot be arrogant and wise at the same time. If I follow the

path of arrogance, I'll fall. But if I follow the path of wisdom, I will be successful.

I believe that we wish to walk in wisdom. Therefore, we must reject any kind of arrogance and pride, and we never will fall. Our path will be triumphantly to victory. And even after achieving success, we stand firm!

11.6 LESSONS OF WISDOM

Consider the pride a weakness, not a strength.

Keep your feet on the ground.

When you have the "temptation" of being arrogant, remember: "It's a trap."

Don't boast, nor promote yourself; do not provoke envy in others.

Be careful with success, praise, and flattery.

Reject an exaggerated concept of yourself.

Never use the arrogance as a "weapon" against others.

Overcome the arrogance through respect.

SECRET 12

THE SOURCE OF ALL THINGS

12.1 HOW EVERYTHING STARTED?

"God blesses man,
not for having found but for having sought."

Victor Hugo

How it all began in the life of Solomon? History tells us that one day he had a dream. In this dream God appeared and asked him: "What would you like me to give you?" This was Solomon's answer: "Give me the wisdom I need to rule your people with justice". Then God said to him: "I will give you wisdom... wealth, treasure, honor, and fame" (I Kings 3:4-14; II Chronicles 1:7-12).

If God asked you the same question, what would you say? I am sure that the answer of most of us would be ask for everything... except wisdom! But the request of Solomon pleased God, and that's why was granted. "God doesn't hear prayers unjust" (Bernolák 304).

Why that Solomon did not ask for riches and glory? Because he knew that this was just one of the consequences of true wisdom. He understood that wisdom was the key to everything, and therefore, he considered that wisdom was worth more than everything in the world! "Wisdom is more valuable than jewels; nothing you could want can compare with it" (Solomon, Pr. 3:15).

Solomon was considered the wisest man in the world. But what was the source of all wisdom of Solomon? God; Solomon saw God as the source of everything. "God is the ultimate source of wisdom and life itself" (John C. Maxwell). We see the following process in the life of Solomon:

- 1- GOD
- 2- Wisdom
- 3- Wealth
- 4- Honor

12.2 THE FALL OF SOLOMON

"God gave Solomon wisdom and very great insight,
and a breadth of understanding
as measureless as the sand on the seashore."

I Kings 4:29 (NIV)

First, God gives wisdom to Solomon. After wisdom comes wealth. Finally, with the wealth comes the honor. But what is the primary source of everything? God. "God is the universal good, and the eternal source of all the blessings of the Universe" (Marquês de Maricá).

Did you know that Solomon, one of the most powerful men of all time, also had his fall? Yes, the kingdom of Israel ended up losing all its glory. And it was divided into two kingdoms (Judah and Israel), when Solomon's son (Rehoboam) took possession of his reign.

Why Solomon did not leave a legacy of prosperity? The Bible tells us that in his old age, he ceased to love God fully. He built temples in honor of "other gods" and gave them worship, because of his one thousand wives who corrupted his heart (I Kings 11: 3). "How could the wisest man in history turn away from God? Once we "arrive," it becomes easy to stop feeling hungry for growth and excellence. How quickly we become satisfied - and how soon we begin to spiral downward... By the end of his reign, this brilliant king somehow forgot the first principle of wisdom: "The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom" Psalm 111:10" (John C. Maxwell).

Although Solomon had possessed what many wanted: power, wisdom, wealth, fame, glory... He reached the end of his life, with the following conclusion: "I have seen everything done in this world, and I tell you, it is all

useless. It is like chasing the wind" (Ecclesiastes 1:14). His last words were: "After all this, there is only one thing to say: Have reverence for God, and obey his commands, because this is all that we were created for" (Ecclesiastes 12:13).

Solomon was not a privileged man, nor one "demigod". While he was linked to its original source, prosperity and glory flowed in his life. But from the moment that Solomon turned away from the source: also prosperity ceased.

This lesson is the last and the most important. The great secret of Solomon was his source: God! He gave to Solomon: justice, wisdom, diligence, generosity and humility. And from there arose all things: greatness, wealth, health and long life, abundance, growth, success, honor and glory.

12.3 BLESSING OF PROSPERITY

"It is the Lord's blessing that makes you wealthy.

Hard work can make you no richer."

Proverbs 10:22

As Solomon justified all his great prosperity? Because of their great effort? Or because of the great blessing of God in his life? He said: "It is useless to work so

hard for a living, getting up early and going to bed late. For the Lord provides for those he loves, while they are asleep" (Psalm 127:2). So the saying goes: "Gains more whom God helps than who works a lot". Or, if you prefer: "More achieves whom works with the favor of God than who works hard" (Branco 591).

There are things that all of us can do. But there are also things that are impossible to achieve. If you live only based on your own strength, there is a limit to your potential. But if you live with God's help, there is no limit because His power is infinite! We can never even get to Solomon's heels without the help of God. After all, who is the Creator of all things? Surely that is not the man. There is someone who is far above us, and that someone is God.

In modern times, where the human being is considered the center of the universe, I understand perfectly well that is not "fashionable" to speak of God. Perhaps because of the bad example of believers over the centuries; or because of corruption of all religions... Well, we have acquired a distorted image about God. However, "God is infinitely greater and better than men can imagine" (Marquês de Maricá).

We want to know who God is? Let's see what the dictionary says: "Supreme Being; infinite; perfect; creator of the universe; divinity; first cause and end of all things". I do not believe in a "god" created by men, but I believe in

the God who created the men! Say that the universe exists, but God does not exist: It is like saying that this book exist, but I don't exist... The existence of this book proves my existence as an author, as well as the existence of creation proves the existence of the Creator! Even the atheist who denies the existence of God is living proof that He exists! "God teaches by His works: Nature is the exhibitor and demonstrator of His infinite wisdom, power and goodness" (Marquês de Maricá).

"But if God exists and is fair, why didn't He give blessings to everyone equally?" Precisely because He is righteous, that does not give blessings to everyone equally. Well, He wants to do it but the decision is always on our side. "When we go up to God in prayer, we are blessed by His hand" (Marquês de Maricá). Prayer to God is the source of all blessings. Note the following: All the wonders that Solomon experienced in his life were not due to chance; He specifically asked God (some of Solomon's prayers were recorded in Psalm 72). If we so desire, we can also make God our source through prayer. And He will supply all our needs and will help us to prosper in all things.

But it is not that simple. Have you seen many unfortunate people, who profess to believe in God? "Most of the men follow God with the words; but they run away from him, with the actions" (Sweet 181). We need to go far beyond simply "believe" if we want to make God our

source. It is necessary to develop full confidence in Him. And do not rely on our own efforts but depend on God 100%.

12.4 RESPECT THE LORD

"Respect the Lord and be humble.

Then you will have wealth, honor, and true life."

Proverbs 22:4 (ERV)

The issue is not just believe, but respect the Lord. What is it means to respect the Lord? First, it means that God is the Lord of our life (our greatest reference). In other words, we put our lives in His hands, because we know that He has the best for us. Secondly, it means seeking God; considering what He says; follow His advice; honor Him; seek to please Him... And above all, love God above all! "We love God because He is good. We respect Him because He is righteous. We adore and admire Him because He is omniscient and omnipotent" (Marquês de Maricá).

And what are the results? Wealth, honor, and true life. What has to do one thing with the other? Normally we do not associate God with wealth. However, who is the most successful person in the entire universe? God. It was He who created all things, and in fact everything that exists belongs to Him!

Have you noticed that nothing belongs to us? Even our own body, one day, we will leave. "Everything is fallible in this world, except the hope and trust in God." (Marquês de Maricá). Like the biblical character Job said: "I came naked from my mother's womb, and I will be naked when I leave" (Job 1:21 NLT). True, we do not take anything when we leave this life. Everything belongs to God. And when someone decides to make God their source, he experiences a true abundance in all aspects of life. "We should be suspicious of us, of men and the world; but always trust in God" (Marquês de Maricá). I find it very interesting that the official motto of the United States (the strongest nation today) is "In God we trust"; in fact, this should be the official motto of our lives: "In God I trust".

12.5 LIFE IN ABUNDANCE

"Respect the Lord leads to life,
a life of abundance, free from evil."

Proverbs 19:23 (BPT09)

Respect God is a path, a way of life. This path has a destiny: Life in abundance. What does it mean abundance? It means having more than enough; beyond the "average"; something that overflows... Our life becomes like a fountain

whose waters never cease... This is someone's life that God quenches continuously.

I firmly believe that all the problems of human being are due originally to disrespect for God. "Respect the Lord is the beginning of knowledge" (Solomon). When someone does not respect God, is not respecting his own life. From the beginning, this error is the cause of all human decay.

But whenever someone respects God in all things, he experiences a true "paradise"! If you respect God in everything: everything you want will be a consequence. This is the biggest secret of all. "A leader's highest aim should be to honor and glorify God" (John C. Maxwell).

12.6 A GOOD FUTURE

"Never envy evil people, but always respect the Lord.

This will give you something to hope for
that will not disappoint you."

Proverbs 23:17-18 (ERV)

How many times we envy others and we forget that God can give us more? So Solomon says: "Never envy... Respect the Lord and you will have everything you need". You need anything? Do not look for those who are blessed... look for God who blesses. We should not consider a mere

creature: our source; let us return to our Creator. "God is the source for every need we may have" (John C. Maxwell).

God loves you as He loved Solomon, or any other human being. You are precious in His sight. "Oh, I've done so many bad things..." God does not love you for what you do, but for what you are. He loves you with the same love, always, regardless of any sin. As it is said: "God hates sin but loves the sinner". Remember: "Don't forget a single day of God, because the Author of memory does not forget a single moment of us" (Marquês de Maricá).

Let me give you the following example: Suppose someone has a check of a million dollars in his hand, and wishes to offer it to you. "Would you accept?" Suppose yes. But before he hand it to you, decides to spit on the check, and trample it with their feet. Then he returns to ask you: "Do you still want this check?" I believe that your answer will be "Yes"; because this check of a million dollars, even if it is dirty, continues to have the same value.

Such is our life before God. No matter the sins we have committed; no matter if other people hurt us; whether our life is a "misery"... Still, we have the same value before God as when we were born! God loves you, and wants to give you a good future. His pleasure is to make you happy. But for that to happen, you need to respect God.

12.7 HONOR GOD

"Honor the Lord with your wealth
and the first part of your harvest.

Then your barns will be full of grain,
and your barrels will be overflowing with wine."

Proverbs 3:9-10 (ERV)

How can we respect and honor God? With our own life, and with all that we have. When we honor God in every area of our lives, no matter how little it may be, will prosper. All things thrive in God's hands! Anything you put in the hands of God will grow; will bear fruit; will overflow... Because where God is, there will always be happiness and abundance! "God can do more than man can understand." (Thomas à Kempis, *De Imitatione Christi* 3.18.3).

See what it said King David, Solomon's father, in his prayer to God: "What a rich harvest your goodness provides! Wherever you go there is plenty... The fields are covered with sheep; the valleys are full of wheat. Everything shouts and sings for joy" (Psalm 65:11,13).

"But if so, why God did not create a perfect world?" In fact, the world was perfect... When humans had respect for God! Remember: "All the problems of the human being are due originally to the lack of respect for God". But whatever the "chaos" that we are going through, from the

moment we start to respect God, we can again experience a “piece of heaven” on earth!

12.8 GREED OR TRUST?

"The greedy stir up conflict,
but those who trust in the Lord will prosper."

Proverbs 28:25 (NIV)

Not worth someone being very ambitious (or greedy), the big secret is to trust in God. "Ambition destroys men" (Marquês de Maricá). A life full of ambition is a life full of conflict, strife and frustrations. But a life of trust in God is a life of prosperity. "But there are prosperous people without God?" We should not believe in that kind of prosperity... It's not perfect nor complete, nor permanent (or eternal). "Human happiness will always be fragile and fleeting when does not have its basis in the love and fear of God... Without reference to God all happiness is empty or incomplete" (Marquês de Maricá).

Prosperity is not just about money, health or success... But it has to do with all aspects of life. "No real meaning exists apart from linking our lives to God's purpose" (John C. Maxwell). You've never heard of someone very rich and famous, get involved in drugs? Being dependent on alcohol? Being involved in corruption?

With separate family? Being unhappy in relationships? Or even commit suicide? "No, my son, do not aspire for wealth and labor not only to be rich. Strive instead for happiness, to be loved and to love, and most important to acquire peace of mind and serenity" (Og Mandino).

There are two kinds of wealth: the inner and outer wealth. The inner wealth has to do with happiness; the outer wealth has to do with success. Happiness depends on what you are. Success depends on what you make. You can be happy and be unsuccessful; and be successful and be unhappy... In any case, happiness is always better than success. Being happy does not mean being successful and being successful does not mean being happy. Where is the virtue? As the saying goes: "In the middle is the virtue" First the happiness and then success, but if you have to choose: Decide to be happy, regardless of success! "So long as I can laugh never will I be poor" (Og Mandino).

12.9 THE MOST IMPORTANT

Notice what said, the richest man who ever lived, comparing spiritual wealth with material wealth:

"Better to be poor and fear the Lord than to be rich and in trouble" (Proverbs 15:16).

"It is better to have a little, honestly earned, than to have a large income, dishonestly gained" (Proverbs 16:8).

"Wisdom is better than rubies, and all the things one may desire cannot be compared with her" (Proverbs 8:11 NKJV).

"A good name is more desirable than great riches; to be esteemed is better than silver or gold" (Proverbs 22:1 NIV).

"Better a small serving of vegetables with love than a fattened calf with hatred" (Proverbs 15:17 NIV).

"Better to be lowly in spirit along with the oppressed than to share plunder with the proud" (Proverbs 16:19 NIV).

Listen to the following story, told by someone who is incomparably greater than Solomon (Luke 11:31), He is the Author of life: the richest Person in the universe!

“Watch out and guard yourselves from every kind of greed; because your true life is not made up of the things you own, no matter how rich you may be.” Then Jesus told them this parable: “There was once a rich man who had land which bore good crops. He began to think to himself, ‘I don't have a place to keep all my crops. What can I do? This is what I will do,’ he told himself; ‘I will tear down my barns and build bigger ones, where I will store the grain and all my other goods. Then I will say to myself, Lucky man! You have all the good things you need for many years. Take life easy, eat, drink, and enjoy yourself!’ But God said to him, ‘You fool! This very night you will have to give up your life; then who will get all these things you have kept for yourself?’” And Jesus concluded, “This is how it is with

those who pile up riches for themselves but are not rich in God's sight.” (Jesus Christ in Luke 12:15-21).

Even if you had all the money in the world: without God, you would not be a happy person... If I had to choose between God and all things? I would rather God! "The greatest treasure of life is hope and trust in God" (Marquês de Maricá). I remember a tile in the kitchen of my in-laws, which read as follows: "Little with God is much, much without God is nothing." If you have God, you have everything. But without God, even if you have "everything": you have absolutely nothing. "With God, everything. Without God, nothing" (Marquês de Maricá). Therefore, the great Master of masters once said: "Be concerned above everything else with the Kingdom of God and with what he requires of you, and he will provide you with all these other things" (Jesus, in Matthew 6:33).

Consider the following prayer recorded in Proverbs 30:7-9 "I ask you, God, to let me have two things before I die: keep me from lying, and let me be neither rich nor poor. So give me only as much food as I need. If I have more, I might say that I do not need you. But if I am poor, I might steal and bring disgrace on my God." (Agur son of Jakeh).

12.10 OUR BEST ALLY

"Ask the Lord to bless your plans,

and you will be successful in carrying them out."

Proverbs 16:3

All we need is to trust God. If we place our lives in His hands, He will take care of us. In fact, we must make God: The Great Master of our lives; our great Friend and Counselor. There is nothing or no one that can replace God. He is Personal and Irreplaceable. The Brazilian writer and politician Mariano Fonseca (Marquês de Maricá) said: "If we have God for us, who can be against us! The Author of intelligence and strength is our biggest and best ally".

Blaise Pascal, the French philosopher, said that there is a void in the form of God in the human heart that only God can fill: "Man tries in vain to fill this empty with everything around him... this infinite abyss can be filled only with an infinite and immutable object; in other words by God himself" (*Pensées*). We should not try to find in people (or things), what only God can give us. "Wise leaders acknowledge their limitations and seek wise counsel from God" (John C. Maxwell).

Solomon made of God, their Source. And while he did so... God blessed him in every way. He left us a good example: on the positive and negative side. And through his life story, Solomon invites us to make God: our Source. This is the great secret of all true prosperity. If we proceed

like this... we will live in abundance. And if God is always our Source, our prosperity will never end!

12.11 LESSONS OF WISDOM

Consider God as the source of everything.

Have always in mind the first principle of wisdom: "The fear of the Lord."

Don't follow God only with words but with actions.

Have the Creator as your major reference, and love Him above all else.

Respect the Lord in all things, and try to please and honor Him.

Faced with any need, turn to God first.

Do not trust in prosperity without Him.

Give more value to spiritual riches than material riches.

Be aware of your limitations, and seek the wise counsel of God.

THE RICHEST MAN OF THE WORLD

"For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world,
and loses his own soul?

Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?"

Jesus Christ

This is the last chapter of this book, and is arguably the most important! I would end with this question put by the most powerful Person who ever lived on Earth: Jesus Christ: "What will it profit a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul?" (Mark 8:36-37 NKJV). This is a crucial question. If we practice all the principles of Solomon, surely we will prosper in life. However, it is worth thinking: What good is it to live a prosperous life, and then die and lose my soul?

The life regardless of everything that can give us, it is quite fleeting. And Jesus alerts us to the most important issue of life: Eternity. If it is a fact that God exists, it is also a fact that the human soul is eternal. Contrary to what some want to believe, life does not end after death. The body dies but the soul lives. The question is where our soul will spend

eternity, with God or without Him? In heaven or hell? In eternal happiness or eternal damnation?

What we need to do to be sure that we will go to heaven? In fact, there is nothing we can do. "We can never redeem ourselves; we cannot pay God the price for our lives, because the payment for a human life is too great. What we could pay would never be enough to keep us from the grave, to let us live forever." (Psalm 49:7-9). When Jesus was asked: "Who can be saved?" He said: "This is impossible for human beings, but for God everything is possible." (Matthew 19:25-26).

What does that mean? What we all know: Every human being is a sinner. Because of our disobedience to God, we are sinners by nature and by decision. As such, it is absolutely impossible for anyone save himself! Since no one is perfect by nature, and that all have sinned by personal decision, no one can by itself achieve the right to enter heaven. "But you have to be perfect to enter heaven?" Precisely. "But then, we are all doomed to hell?" Precisely. "But is there any solution?" Precisely. Jesus is the solution for all of us.

Why? The purpose of God sending His Son to earth about 2000 years ago was: "For God loved the world so much that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not die but have eternal life." (Jesus, in John 3:16). Note: the human being was doomed, but

because God loves us, He sent His only Son to save us. "But what Jesus has done for us?" He paid the price of our salvation! By dying for us on the cross, He paid the penalty for our sins: the Just for the unjust, the Saint for sinners. He suffered condemnation in our place. "This means that all human beings have been saved?" Yes and no. Yes, because Jesus already paid the price for all mankind. No, because every single person needs to believe in Him.

Jesus said, "I am telling you the truth: he who believes has eternal life." (John 6:47). But as we know this is true? When Jesus rose from the dead, He proved that has power over death and that can grant eternal life, to all those who believe in Him. Now, dear reader, this is the key point: Eternal life is the greatest prosperity we can achieve. Not only because it is an eternal life (that will last forever - by millions and millions of years - without ever end), but also because it means an absolute and perfect happiness in the presence of God (something that we can't never experience here on Earth).

And the best news of all is this: Eternal life is a gift from God to all who receive Jesus in their lives. "To all who did receive Him (Jesus), to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God" (John 1:12 NIV). Open your heart to receive the greatest wealth of the world: Jesus Christ. If you do, God will forgive you, Jesus will dwell in your life, you will become a child of God, and

can be assured of eternal life (in addition to many other blessings...).

How to receive Jesus? Through prayer. "Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved." (Acts 2:21 NIV). If you have this desire, consider the following prayer:

"My God, I admit before You that I am a sinner; and that by myself, I can never enter heaven. Thanks for your love for me, for having sent your Son Jesus to save me. I believe that Jesus is my Savior; that He died for my sins; and rose again to give me eternal life. Now: I ask You to forgive me all my sins, come into my heart, and grant me a place in heaven. From now on, You are my Father and I am your son. I want to live every day with You, and for all eternity. I love You and I thank You forever... In the Name of Jesus, so be it (Amen)." (Sign your name below).

I, _____, date _____.

What to do now? Let me give you just three advices:

1. Read the Bible, starting with the New Testament, to know Jesus better and learn to do the will of God.
2. Talk to God daily, He is your heavenly Father who takes care of all your needs.
3. Attends a Christian church in your city, to meet other Christians and grow in your spiritual life.

If you put this last lesson into practice, you can have one certainty: There is nothing more precious in this world

than our salvation in Christ! It is the greatest prosperity we can achieve in this life and forever. There is no wealth that can compare... If you have Jesus in your life, you are the richest person in the world! You have literally everything. He is the true source of all things, He is our greatest treasure!

"The best of all is to believe in Jesus Christ."

Luís de Camões

BE LIKE SOLOMON

THE PATH TO SUCCESS

We conclude our learning about Solomon's secrets. Although they are many secrets, we are only talking about a path to success. This path includes several directions: God, justice, wisdom, diligence, generosity, humility. At this point you may be motivated to follow it, but along the way you will feel the tiredness and fatigue of a long journey. And it's in those moments that you will be tempted to walk through "shortcuts".

What are the "shortcuts" to success? Hurry, injustice, negligence, laziness, vices, pride. These shortcuts never present with these names, but most likely as: The fastest way to success, Be smart, Change your luck, The best for you, Do everything you want, You are the best... As you can see, all these "shortcuts" are much more attractive than an arduous road to success. But do not be fooled by easy promises, nor be discouraged before the impossible. As Einstein said, "One should not pursue goals that are easily achieved. One must develop an instinct for what one can just barely achieve through one's greatest efforts."

The secret is in the balance. True success is not about money only, but has to do with all areas of life. Believe: There are poor who are happier than rich. The formula for success includes many variants beyond the finances. "How sad to see a father with money and no joy. The man studied economics, but never studied happiness" (Jim Rohn). We must not sacrifice our happiness "in the name of success", because this will result in failure. Do not exchange your inner peace by nothing!

12 SECRETS OF SOLOMON

Let's remember the 12 Solomon's secrets about prosperity:

Secret 1 - Hurry is an obstacle of wealth

Secret 2 - Justice is the firm foundation of success

Secret 3 - Injustice is a cause of failure

Secret 4 - Wisdom is the key to glory

Secret 5 - Negligence is the origin of ruin

Secret 6 - Diligence is the path to abundance

Secret 7 - Laziness is a trap of poverty

Secret 8 - Generosity is the seed for growth

Secret 9 - Vices are enemies of prosperity

Secret 10 - Humility is the guide for greatness

Secret 11 - Pride is a reason for the fall

Secret 12 - God is the source of all things

A SECRET TO EVERY MONTH

Because Solomon's secrets are 12, and because there are 12 months in the year, you can dedicate a month to study and apply each of secrets (since January: Secret 1, until December: Secret 12).

"But reading the book only once is not enough?" Remember: Closed book does not do any good. "An obvious truth must be learned through daily meditation... We must study, not to know more, but to know better!" (Seneca, in his masterpiece: "Moral Letters to Lucilius").

Read and read again, meditate, reflect, remember... Until all secrets are internalized and become a habit, a way of life, a part of your being. When this happens, everything you do will prosper.

PRINCIPLES OF SUCCESS AND FAILURE

If you watch the twelve principles of the success of Solomon, you see that: six correspond to something positive, and that we must practice; and the other six represent something negative, and that we must avoid. "The

ancient wisdom was limited to stipulate what men should do or avoid" (Seneca).

The six principles of success that we should follow are: God, justice, wisdom, diligence, generosity and humility (these are the factors that lead us to win). And if we look good, we will see that these principles are exactly opposite to the six principles of failure: hurry, injustice, negligence, laziness, vices and pride (these are the factors that cause us to lose).

Remember: "Winning is important but it is also important not to lose." Therefore, balance is critical. We must not fall to either extreme. The real growth happens when we do not lose what we earn.

SIX SIMPLE QUESTIONS

We could summarize these secrets in six simple questions:

- 1- I will be faithful or rushed?
- 2- I'll be just or unjust?
- 3- I will be wise or negligent?
- 4- I will be diligent or lazy?
- 5- I'll be generous or selfish?
- 6- I will be humble or proud?

As Shakespeare said, "To be or not to be, that is the question" (Hamlet). What you are determines what you will get. What you do determines what you do, and what you do determines what you will have. For this very reason: "Success is not to be pursued; it is to be attracted by the person you become" (Jim Rohn). You attract what you are.

SIX RULES OF SOLOMON

To conserve the twelve secrets in our memory, we will summarize them in just six. The six rules of Solomon:

- I- Be faithful and not rushed.
- II- Be just and not unjust.
- III- Be wise and not negligent.
- IV- Be diligent and not lazy.
- V- Be generous and not selfish.
- VI- Be humble and not proud.

CHOOSE YOUR FRIENDS

"Either wise bearing or ignorant carriage is caught,
as men take diseases one of another;
therefore, let men take heed of their company."
William Shakespeare (King Henry IV, Part 2)

The being is crucial. What determines what we are? Our influences. As the saying goes, "Tell me with whom you walk and I'll tell you who you are." Those who walk with us, influence our way of being. "You become like those with whom you partner" (John C. Maxwell). So Solomon says: "He who goeth with the wise, shall be wise; the friend of fools shall be made like them" (Proverbs 13:20 WYC). That is, the wisdom of those with whom we walk will positively influence who we are. On the other hand, the wickedness of the people closest to us will also negatively influence our life. "Every leader's potential is determined by the people closest to him" (John C. Maxwell).

Always seek the company of who is: faithful, just, wise, diligent, generous and humble; it is with these that you will learn. The wise "not only stimulates himself, but is also stimulated by other wise; the best way to learn the righteous principles... is by living with good people" (Seneca). And do not forget the company of a good book. "Why should fools have money in hand to buy wisdom, when they are not able to understand it?" (Solomon, Pr. 17:16 NIV). You know you can buy wisdom? Where? In a bookstore! There, you can purchase a wise book.

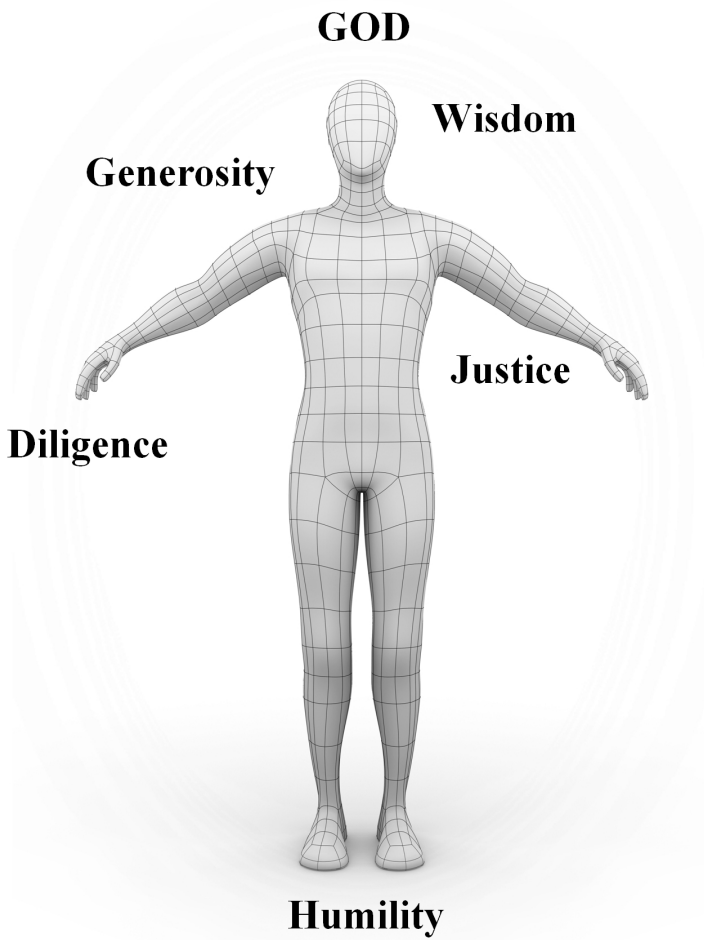
"And what to do with people hasty, unfair, negligent, lazy, selfish and proud?" Well, these are people that you have the mission to help! "You must live with those who make you better; and also socialize with whom you can help

to be better. It is necessary to use reciprocity: those who teach also learn" (Seneca). Your greatest ability to influence, however, is through your own example. Words are carried by the wind; but the example is what remains. "Example is the main ingredient in influencing others... A good example is worth a thousand sermons" (John C. Maxwell). Another way to influence is reading. You can recommend reading this book "Secrets of Solomon" or other book that you have enjoyed. Why not? "Books do not change the world, who changes the world is people. The books simply change the people" (Mário Quintana). One cannot overlook the power of a small seed: A good book too, is like a seed that can bear much fruit.

Finally, the biggest advice I can give to you is: "Walk with Solomon and you will be like him." Listen to the teachings of the wise Solomon in your everyday life, and put into practice. If you do that, you will become wise, and certainly will experience prosperity in all aspects of your life.

THE WINNER'S PROFILE

*Mind in wisdom,
heart in God.
Trunk in justice,
shoulders in generosity.
Hands in diligence,
feet in humility.*



CONCLUSION

In a world increasingly in crisis, I believe it is urgent prosperity for everyone! With this purpose I decided to undertake a "journey" in search of solutions to the problems we all face. In that search, I discovered the King Solomon. And when I analyzed, not only his life story but also the society in which he lived, I found that they were an ideal example for us to follow, today.

By studying the life and work of Solomon, and implement its principles, I experienced great benefits. I'm sure the same will happen to you, and anyone who follows the footsteps of the Wise.

I learned that throughout History, many people were influenced by his teachings. It is true that not all of these people reveal that fact. But we can see by comparing many of his words, with the writings of Solomon.

One such case is the celebrated philosopher Lucius Seneca (first century AD). We find in his books, many of Solomon's principles taught in this book. By studying the life of Seneca I also noticed that in addition to wise he was rich (although he had lived modestly, despising wealth). I wonder why?

Solomon lived about three millennia ago, but wisdom has always existed. Wisdom is ancestral, and spans generations. Wisdom is universal. Although many philosophers (as the case of Seneca) not have known the person and work of Solomon, because they were in tune with the wisdom - it is natural that they teach the same thing. Seneca said, "Whatever is true, belongs to me... the right ideas are property of all" (Letters to Lucilius 12:11). Wisdom belongs to all who seek it.

It is curious to see over the centuries, as many philosophers taught the same principles of Solomon (although some have not known Solomon). I think this is mainly due to the fact that they all lived on the same planet Earth and found the same laws that govern human life.

We learn wisdom, essentially, through practice. It has nothing to do with inventing "theories", but observe nature and understand how it works. "The truths are discovered, cannot be invented" (Marquês de Maricá). Therefore, I encourage every reader to prove by his own experience all that is written in this book. "Meditate on these words continuously... However, you should confirm by experience the truth of what you have heard" (Seneca).

In more recent History, people like Abraham Lincoln, Henry Ford and Thomas Edison, among others, read "Proverbs of Solomon" in their youth. And many current celebrities such as Bill Gates (currently the

wealthiest person in the world with a net worth of US\$90 billion as of August 2016), Oprah Winfrey, and Steven Spielberg, achieved their dreams by doing the same things that Solomon teaches.

Another example is the billionaire Steven K. Scott. In his book "The Richest Man Who Ever Lived", he counts as a day in his youth through a friend (Gary Smalley) became aware of the book "Proverbs of Solomon." From there, he studied and applied in his day to day the wisdom of Proverbs, and his life was completely transformed at all levels: personal, professional and financial.

Follow the example of Steven K. Scott, when he was still a poor young man, and decide to read a chapter of Proverbs each day. I'm sure that your life will be transformed. "Always remember this teaching. Don't forget it. It is the key to life, so guard it well" (Solomon, Pr. 4:13 ERV). And for that, I recommend you use a modern translation of the Bible so that you can easily understand. By doing your reading, always keep a pen and paper handy to help you make your daily notes. Take note not just something you learned, but also practical actions to apply. And the result will be also wonderful in your life. "I urge you to follow Solomon's advice and study his words" (Steven K. Scott).

The book of Proverbs of Solomon has 915 verses. In this work, we used about 114 verses (only a percentage of

12%, approximately, of the verses contained in Proverbs). You can still learn a lot from Solomon.

Proverbs are divided into 31 chapters: one chapter for each day of the month (from Day 1 - Proverbs 1, until Day 31 - Proverbs 31). "And the months with only 30 days?" You can read up to Proverbs 30 (or in February, Proverbs 28/29). Each chapter has about 30 verses, which occupy little time out of your day. But believe me: you'll be making a good investment. "If you have studied to your advantage, you have not lost time" (Seneca). "The reflection is as necessary to our soul, as digestion to our body." (Marquês de Maricá). The word is the food of the soul!

What you'll get of Proverbs? Some of the advantages promised by Solomon, for those who practice his advices: "Good judgment; Preservation and protection; Success; Better health; Longer life; Honor; Financial abundance; Favor of those in authority; Commendation and promotions; Financial independence; Confidence; Strength of character; Courage; Extraordinary achievement; Personal fulfillment; Great relationships; A truly meaningful life; Love and admiration of others; Understanding; True wisdom" (Steven K. Scott).

All this? Yes. Remember: "Your mentality will determine your reality." Therefore, knowledge is so important to our lives. Solomon said that wisdom is the most important thing that we should seek - because it will

determine everything else (but remember: Who is the Source of wisdom - Ecclesiastes 12:1).

We are completing our learning, but your journey does not end here: the journey has just begun! It's good to learn, but even better is to practice. When you practice the advices of Solomon, and begin to see positive results in your own life, you will have a great enthusiasm to continue to learn and grow in wisdom! And remember: one small action is worth a thousand words. "I hear and I forget. I see and I remember. I do and I understand" (Chinese proverb).

Be an eternal apprentice...

THOUSAND WORDS

*Only one tiny action,
is better than thousand words!
Without correct application,
all knowledges are voids.*

*As one castle in the sand
is forgotten by the sea,
Also the idea is forgotten
when it is solely theory.*

*Knowledge is just the beginning,
and without action is anything.
It's like a lifeless body
or a king without authority.*

*So much wisdom, but for what?
If I simply cross my arms?
I know and I failed, why?
I did not put into practice!*

*The knowledge is very precious,
however the greatest benefit:
It is not how much you know,
but is how much you does it!*

You want what you never had?

Do what you've never made...

Daniel de Oliveira

APPENDIX

LESSONS OF WISDOM

1. "I do not run after riches. I don't have the ambition of wealth, nor lay my eyes on the money. I reject the ambition and greed. I never procrastinate my happiness, but I'm thankful and happy today. I search the inner riches, and I'm faithful in little things. I build my wealth slowly, consistently and gradually. I save 10% for myself of all the money I earn, regardless of my obligations. I run away from all kinds of "fever" to the money and getting rich quick. I build my life based on knowledge."

2. "I build my life in the solid foundation of justice. I respect the rights of others with equality and impartiality. I contribute to a fairer world. I wish to be a righteous person, and I feed this desire on a daily basis. I live honestly, without being ashamed of me, even when no one is watching. I do not enrich incorrectly: through lies, corruption, illegality or theft... I make fair decisions. I'm motivated by the desire and not by fear, and I focus on what is good. I practice and propagate justice, and I avoid all kinds of evil."

3. "I do good, although have some initial disadvantage. I'm afraid of bad consequences, and I avoid evil. I not harm the poor nor give to the rich. I not commit unjust acts, offensive, improper or illegitimate. Someone does an injustice against me? I don't do the same. I do good to my enemies. I am not fool, stingy, miserly or oppressor. I help others, not harm. I try to be honorable and honest. I don't desire illicit wealth. I surpass myself and all the "temptation" of injustice, falsehood and evil practice."

4. "Above all, I love wisdom. I seek the wisdom intentionally. Before go to "war", I prepare a good strategy. I'm not foolish, I don't believe in my ideas only, nor think that I know everything. I'm prudent, and I doubt from myself. I learn from experience through reflection. I make decisions based on past experiences. I'm focus on wisdom: I pursue wisdom, not riches. I listen to wisdom, and ignore the folly. I desire learning and I like to be corrected. I learn to reflect daily and seek to understand. I do not think I am "wise", but an apprentice. I always say: I only know that I know nothing. Instead of giving answers, I ask questions. I seek to know, understand and apply in practice what I learned."

5. "I never try to blame or control others. My focus is master myself. I do not trust in the natural order of things: I think, speak and act intentionally. I cultivate good thoughts and speak good words. I control my impulses and emotions. I dominate my mouth, putting energy into concrete actions. I roll up my sleeves and get to work. I adopt the following motto: Say little and do much."

6. "I walk forward, even without knowing the way. I walk with perseverance to reach the goal. I'm diligent, zealous, careful, applied, active, agile. I think of every action like a good seed planted in the ground. I don't exchange responsibility for futility. I keep my priorities. I don't believe that success is easy. I put the focus on the work. I do what I should and not what I want. I get out of my comfort zone and go to fight. I set my goals, and I think of strategies to achieve those goals. I'm active; I always take the initiative and not wait for things to happen. I take another step, and if not enough, I take another step and another still."

7. "I do not stand still, nor have afraid of making mistakes. I reject all laziness, aversion to work, and inaction. I have the audacity to take the first step and overcome the initial inertia. I reject the "pleasures" of laziness, and accept with pleasure the "pains" of work. I recognize that work is good

and is a source of profit. I work diligently and joyfully. I am enterprising, responsible, industrious, persistent and prudent."

8. "I believe in abundance and don't have fear of scarcity. I multiply the money by giving generously. I helping the needy: I give the "fish", and teach to "fish". I do what is my responsibility without fear of being "cheated". I view a plea for help, as an investment opportunity. I show mercy to others, and increase my "bank account" of generosity. I am friend of the poor and needy, and I help with joy. I put people first, and concentrate on serving. I'm grateful for all things, and reject greed. I consider the money as a resource, and I practice the habit of making donations and offerings."

9. "I never judge something as being good just because it gives pleasure. I'm very careful with the immediate pleasure. I hate all that is evil, objectionable, harmful and addictive. I avoid idleness, and I stay occupied with good things. I avoid loneliness, and when I'm alone, I act like I were with someone. I have fun with wisdom, not with evil. I say 'no' to myself, and put my decisions above my emotions. I always hate the vices. I continually think long-term, investing in sustainable happiness."

10. "I see myself as a little person. I do not trust in exaggerated claims or high expectations. I reduce myself to a humble position, where it is not possible to fall. I maintain humility in victory. I work, learn and improve based on humility. I never get jealous of someone successful; but I see that person as an example to follow. I do not consider myself a humble person. I desire more and more humility as the "bread" of each day. Whenever I have the temptation to aggrandize myself, I remind my limitations and failures."

11. "I consider the pride a weakness, not a strength. I keep my feet on the ground. When I have the "temptation" of being arrogant, I remember: It's a trap. I don't boast, nor promote myself; I do not provoke envy in others. I am careful with success, praise, and flattery. I reject an exaggerated concept of myself. I never use the arrogance as a "weapon" against others. I overcome the arrogance through respect."

12. "I consider God as the source of everything. I have always in mind the first principle of wisdom: The fear of the Lord. I don't follow God only with words but with actions. I have the Creator as my major reference, and I love Him above all else. I respect the Lord in all things, and I try to please and honor Him. Faced with any need, I turn to God first. I do not trust in prosperity without Him. I give more

value to spiritual riches than material riches. I'm aware of my limitations, and I seek the wise counsel of God."

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