

25/09/2016

PROV 18:21 = WORDS (The power of the tongue - words become works)

#SCRIPTURE READING: James 1:26/3:1-12, Proverbs 18:21, Mark 11:12-14, Matt 5:11-12

#SERMON=INTRODUCTION: *Carol learnt about the power of the tongue/words the hard way. *When her husband bought their 16 year old son (Andrew) a motorbike, she wasn't happy at all.* Day-after-day, when Andrew greeted her in the morning on his way to school, she said: "My son, be careful - *one day you are going to break your neck with this m'bike.*" And then it happened: *At the age of 18 Andrew died in a horrific m'bike accident - breaking his neck...* *When Sharon was in Grd 7, she battled to spell. One morning at school, her English teacher handed out everybody's essay books, except hers. He raised her book in front of the whole class, showed them all the spelling errors marked in red - and then forced her to spell each mistake correctly in front of everybody. As if the humiliation wasn't enough, he added: "*Sharon, you will never-ever be able to spell correctly*"... Years later, herself being a teacher then, Sharon taught with a dictionary and a spelling rules guide at hand, because (she said): "*The moment 2 children spelt polar bear 'b-a-r-e', I doubted the correct spelling...*"

+**TRANSITION:** B/S in CJ, *do you believe words have power? Do you believe the words we say to other people can influence their lives drastically? Do you believe words become works?*..

+**EXEGESIS&APPLICATION:** *Why do words have power?* There are different opinions. *One group* brushes it aside as *a psychological phenomenon*, calling it *self-fulfilling prophecy*. Meaning: Man is *highly impressionable* (*hoog beïnvloedbaar*). Therefore *we can indoctrinate someone by repeating words/phrases continuously*. You just keep on saying something to someone - and they'll start acting accordingly. For example: A group of friends agree to tell a certain person (at different times during the day) that he doesn't look good - is he well/OK? They say that there's a good chance this guy will start feeling ill during the afternoon, *merely because he's reacting to what he has been "programmed" during the day*. Therefore, these people say, *words as such don't have power; their "power" rather lies in the value the listener attaches to them*.

Another group (and I would like to identify myself with them) acknowledges that the above-mentioned does play a role - *but believes "there's more to words"*. B/S, *words have power/become works, because Góð gave to the spoken word a certain power. (1) God created the world (including us) by uttering words (GEN 1:3, 6, 9&26); because we were created in His image - our words also have creative/destructive power. (2) Our Scripture reading confirms it - PROV 18:21a="Death and life are in the power of the tongue."* When we read JAM 3:9-10 it confirms this truth. In the light of this, we have to add: Yes, words become works - *but words can also become weapons!* In MARK 11:12-14 (the cursing of the figtree) Jesus gives a practical illustration of the power of words. In v22-24 He confirms *our "oral power": In the heavenlies our words have the ability to move mountains = to remove obstructions/strongholds*.

**What are the practical implications of this? (1) That we need to be very careful about the words we utter, because words become works & weapons = we can speak death over people. (2) That we need to re-think the way in which we approach certain situations/people.*

Because of the fall of man and the original sin (*erfsonde*), *we tend rather to think/speak negatively/destructively about people; we seldom - if ever! - give people the benefit of the doubt*. Now God expects from us *to guard our mouths and rather bless people than curse them* (PS 141:3/1 PET 3:9-10). You want to ask: "*Blessing instead of cursing?..*" [By the way, *my starting point is not humanism* - wanting to be good/nice to other people, *but rather to serve and be a fragrance unto salvation / 2 COR 2:12-17*] Blessing/Cursing: *A teacher shouting at a child: "You stupid idiot!" *A spouse (during a heated argument) *telling his/her partner:* "I hope something happens to you - and that I'll never-ever see you again."

*Bride of JC, bottomline is: ***Words can become weapons***. Look at the 4 illustrations James uses to demonstrate the incredible power of the tongue: ***a horse bit*** that controls this strong animal, ***a ship's small rudder*** that steers this huge vessel, ***a single match*** that can have devastating consequences & ***all types of wild animals*** being tamed. But then He continues by saying ***the tongue***, or, as *Martin Luther* called it, "that small piece of meat between our jaws", ***is even mightier/more difficult to tame, with the potential of becoming a spiritual dagger that hacks/shreds, hurting and wounding - killing!..*** Is that the reason Jesus says in **MATT 5:22** = "**But I say to you that whoever is angry with his brother without a cause, shall be in danger of the judgment. And whoever says to his brother, 'Raca' [speaking contemptuously/insulting to his brother] shall be in danger of the council. Whoever says, 'You fool!' shall be in danger of hell fire.**"

*No B/S, ***God expects his children to be an encouragement/blessing when they speak***. Re-phrase: God wants us ***to speak "a Spiritual language of conquerors"***. This implies ***that (a) out of a renewed mind = knowing who you are in Christ & from consecrated thought patterns (ROM 8:37,12:3), I rather see people's Kingdom potential at the foot of the cross than focusing on their weaknesses; (b) that because of this and because there's life/death in the tongue, I speak "Life" over them... How do I practically do this? I speak/quote Scripture. JOHN 15:7 = "If you live in Me [abide vitally united to Me] and My words remain in you and continue to live in your heart, ask whatever you will, and it shall be done for you."*** (AMPF)

Allow me to use a simple illustration. ***Let's say I battle with insomnia***. When I pray about this - ***I don't "pray the problem - but God's answer to the problem"***. In other words, I don't keep on reminding God about my problem (I've already done it more than once!), ***but approach Him "prayerfully" with the answers/promises He has given from his Word***. [Remember, ***in humility*** I am allowed to remind Abba of his promises to me - **ISAI 62:6**] Thus ***(re insomnia): "Father, You told me through your Word that I can fall into a deep sleep, because You sustain me, and that I can lie down in peace and sleep, for You alone, o Lord, make me dwell in safety (PS's 3:5/4:8). Thank you Abba Father, that because of this, You will enable me now - in/through the Name of Jesus Christ - to fall asleep quietly..."***

Nó, B/S, in saying this I trust that ***I'm not seen as part of the charismaniac "name-it-and-claim-it-squad"***. ***And I'm not saying this derogatory***. It is just ***that we must be very careful not to have "faith-in-faith", because apparent faith can so easily border on a lie! Remember, Satan is the master liar/the father of all lies (JOHN 8:44). But I trust/believe in a sovereign God, Who, once He has given me his Word (ISAI 55:11), will bring it to pass in his time!***

****Children:(1) Naming them: "Transferring personalities"***; boy that's named after his granddad/dad becomes a "carbon copy" of this person. Author of "*Like water for chocolate*", ***Laura Esquivel*** of Mexico (non-believer); ***refused to give her children family names, because of fear of transferring "baggage"***. My own testimony *re* Zulu nickname till 2003. ***(2) Teachers/children: An incredible opportunity to "sow life" into their futures***. Huge privilege - with even bigger responsibility. Possibly persons here with stories *re* something negative a teacher said and the longterm impact on their lives. *Re* my introduction: ***Sharon*** (who became a teacher herself) said: "Later in my life, when I started understanding these things better, I asked God to reveal all the truth *re* this matter, to me. He told me that what that teacher told me at school, was a lie. Although it was many years later, ***I could forgive that teacher - and accept God's forgiveness in my life for believing it for so many years. Today I spell 100% correctly!..***" ***(3) To bless and anoint our children: Jewish families x shabbat*** - we don't need to add anything more...

+**CONCLUSION**: My dear B/S in CJ: ***Some call it self-fulfilling prophecy. Others say words have power/become works, because God gave the spoken word a certain power. Point is: Words do become works. Words can become weapons... No, we mustn't become superstitious or legalistic, but take note of this reality...*** Bottomline: JC had "the last say" on the cross; therefore ***we as his born-again bride, can speak a "language of victory"!*** (...\\Preke\\Woorde\\Spr18v21b)