

Bibles???

The Word of God is the Absolute Truth and the Final Authority

Turn your bibles with me to 1 King 3

We are going to continue our verse-by-verse study through 1 Kings –

Last week – we saw the transition from King David to Solomon –

We saw how Solomon responded to David charge to take care of some unfinished business – to deal with those that were going to bring him trouble in his reign

And we saw how Solomon responded – he obeyed and he dealt with those individuals.

In our text this evening, we are going to be looking at the early years of Solomon's reign – and we are going to see his godly wisdom on display.

Let's pray...

In our study last week – one of the things that I pointed out was how different the backgrounds of David and Solomon were.

David was a warrior, he was a fighter

David was a great leader –

And this was developed by his upbringing and by the trials in his life.

David had a shepherd's heart.

This was something he learned at a young age – and he ruled God’s people with the same shepherd’s heart.

[Psa 78:72 NKJV] 72 So he shepherded them according to the integrity of his heart, And guided them by the skillfulness of his hands.

The psalmist is referring to how David ruled the kingdom.

Solomon on the other was not a fighter

He didn’t have the tough upbringing that David had

He lived in the palace

He was protected

He didn’t rule with a shepherd’s heart

Solomon as we will see, ruled in the same way a politician would rule.

Solomon was a builder

Not only does he build the temple – but he builds the kingdom.

But in order to build the kingdom – money is needed.

So Solomon – puts a heavy burden on the people with heavy taxation.

David places his trust in God

Solomon places his trust in authority, in monuments and the peace treaties that he makes with other nations.

And so we begin,

[1Ki 3:1-28 NKJV] 1 Now Solomon made a treaty with Pharaoh king of Egypt, and married Pharaoh's daughter; then he brought her to the City of David until he had finished building his own house, and the house of the LORD, and the wall all around Jerusalem.

The name Solomon is derived from root word “Shalom” which means peace

So his name means peaceful one

And Solomon certainly lived up to his name -

Because Solomon wanted to maintain peace with the nations around him – and the way that he did it, he married a daughter from his neighbors.

Those 700 wives he had – he didn't collect them because he was looking for love – he was looking for peace.

So for example, the king of Egypt would be less likely to attack Israel because his daughter was there.

This was a customary practice throughout the world during this time – however, **it was something that was not from the Lord.**

This is going to be a theme with Solomon – where there is something that is customary for society, but God has forbidden it.

We looked at Deut 17:17 – last week, where God forbids the multiplying of wives.

So Solomon could argue and try to justify it and say, “I am just trying to keep the peace”

The problem – God forbid it.

And the same thing is true today -

Just because everyone around me is doing it or just because society says it is ok – it doesn't give me the excuse to do it – because it could be something that is not from the Lord.

There will be consequences – and we will certainly see those consequences in the life of Solomon.

2 Meanwhile the people sacrificed at the high places, because there was no house built for the name of the LORD until those days.

The Ark of the Covenant – was in a tent in Jerusalem.

The tabernacle was 7 miles away in Gibeon.

– so the priests were not doing what they were supposed to do – so the people took it upon themselves to fix up altars that were dedicated to pagan gods and they started offering sacrifices to the Lord on those altars –

The problem is that the Lord is very clear that He should only be worshipped in the place where He assigned.

We worship Him on His terms – not our terms.

3 And Solomon loved the LORD, walking in the statutes of his father David, except that he sacrificed and burned incense at the high places.

So – here we see that these sacrifices and burning of incense at the high places was actually not a good thing –

Because the scriptures record for us an exception -

Solomon loved the Lord

Walked in the statutes of David

Except – he participated in unlawful worship

God wants us to worship Him as He prescribed.

Not at our convenience but at His desire

We don't want exceptions in our lives – especially when it comes to worship.

4 Now the king went to Gibeon to sacrifice there, for that [was] the great high place: Solomon offered a thousand burnt offerings on that altar. 5 At Gibeon the LORD appeared to Solomon in a dream by night; and God said, "Ask! What shall I give you?" 6 And Solomon said: "You have shown great mercy to Your servant David my father, because he walked before You in truth, in righteousness, and in uprightness of heart with You; You have continued this great kindness for him, and You have given him a son to sit on his throne, as [it is] this day. 7 "Now, O LORD my God, You have made Your servant king instead of my father David, but I [am] a little child; I do not know [how] to go out or come in. 8 "And Your servant [is] in the midst of Your people whom You have chosen, a great people, too numerous to be numbered or counted. 9 "Therefore give to Your servant an **understanding heart** to judge Your people, that I may discern between good and evil. For who is able to judge this great people of Yours?"

When we read 2 Chron 1 –

We learn that Solomon didn't go to Gibeon alone –

He was met there by all the leaders of Israel.

This was like his official coronation event.

All these leaders were there to show and give their allegiance to him.

And after meeting the leaders – Solomon made a huge offering to the Lord as a way to let the people know he intended to follow the example of his father David.

But remember what I said – Solomon was young and experienced

And so that night – when he went to bed – he had a hard time falling asleep – knowing the magnitude of what he was called to do –

When God appears to him in a dream & asks what he wants, there's only one response that seems right; he asks for the wisdom & skill to rule God's people well.

You know what this tells us about Solomon?

It tells us he already had a measure of wisdom.

And the wisdom he had, told him he needed more.

Solomon is saying -

"I don't know what I am doing"

He is pretty much saying – "I am not my dad"

I had you make a note that Solomon asked for understanding heart –

He didn't ask for an understanding mind

And the reason is that if the heart is wrong – the mind will make bad decisions

The bible tells us to guard our hearts because out of it, will flow the issues of life.

(Proverbs 4:23)

Another definition for the word that is used here for understanding is the word "hearing"

Solomon asks for a hearing heart –

And the significance of this is that true understanding comes from hearing what God has to say on any matter.

10 The speech pleased the Lord, that Solomon had asked this thing. 11 Then God said to him: "Because you have asked this thing, and have not asked long life for yourself, nor have asked riches for yourself, nor have asked the life of your enemies, but have asked for yourself understanding to discern justice, 12 "behold, I have done according to your words; see, I have given you a wise and understanding heart, so that there has not been anyone like you before you, nor shall any like you arise after you. 13 "And I have also given you what you have not asked: both riches and honor, so that there shall not be anyone like you among the kings all your days. 14 "So if you walk in My ways, to keep My statutes and My commandments, as your father David walked, then I will lengthen your days." 15 Then Solomon awoke; and indeed it had been a dream. And he came to Jerusalem and stood before the ark of the covenant of the

LORD, offered up burnt offerings, offered peace offerings, and made a feast for all his servants.

What an answer from God –

Solomon, I have done what you asked.

I am giving you a wise and understanding heart.

But notice – God gives Solomon what he asked and then God gives Solomon more

God gives Solomon what he didn't ask for. He gives Solomon what he could have asked for.

God shows Solomon grace

He gives him a conditional promise of long life – if he obeyed, he's going to live a long time, he is going to receive riches, honor, wisdom and an understanding heart.

I want you to think about this –

Is wisdom the best thing that Solomon could have asked for????

Consider the following – remember how I keep mentioning the differences between Solomon and David.

Solomon sought wisdom

David sought wisdom's source

Solomon wanted to know how to rule

David wanted to know Him who rules

Solomon wanted to know how to judge Israel

David wanted to know the Judge of Heaven & Earth

Solomon asked for an understanding heart to know the people's need

David asked for a heart to understand God's desire

[Psa 27:4 NKJV] 4 One [thing] I have desired of the LORD, That will I seek: That I may dwell in the house of the LORD All the days of my life, To behold the beauty of the LORD, And to inquire in His temple.

One thing I have desired – you know who didn't have that desire (or at least the scriptures don't tell us had that desire (Solomon)

16 Now two women [who were] harlots came to the king, and stood before him.

17 And one woman said, "O my lord, this woman and I dwell in the same house; and I gave birth while she [was] in the house. 18 "Then it happened, the third day after I had given birth, that this woman also gave birth. And we [were] together; no one [was] with us in the house, except the two of us in the house. 19 "And this woman's son died in the night, because she lay on him. 20 "So she arose in the middle of the night and took my son from my side, while your maidservant

slept, and laid him in her bosom, and laid her dead child in my bosom. 21 "And when I rose in the morning to nurse my son, there he was, dead. But when I had examined him in the morning, indeed, he was not my son whom I had borne." 22 Then the other woman said, "No! But the living one [is] my son, and the dead one [is] your son." And the first woman said, "No! But the dead one [is] your son, and the living one [is] my son." Thus they spoke before the king.

So we have a case of she said, she said

No witnesses

Just the two harlots living together –

They both have babies within days of each other

One of them accidentally squishes the baby in his sleep when she rolls over him in her sleep

And she then swaps her baby with the other baby

And they have this heated argument in front of Solomon –

Verse 22 – in the NLT

[1Ki 3:22 NLT] 22 Then the other woman interrupted, "It certainly was your son, and the living child is mine." "No," the first woman said, "the living child is mine, and the dead one is yours." And so they argued back and forth before the king.

So now, inspired by the Holy Spirit, we are going to see the Godly wisdom that Solomon received as a result of his request to God in the dream.

We have this episode in Solomon's life that is going to require incredible wisdom –

Two women, both with credible stories –

Which one to believe?

By the way – the situation that we are told here between these two women – It happens in every type of dispute today.

It could be a marriage dispute, it could be a family dispute or even a dispute within the brethren – here at church.

So, we should be careful -

[Pro 18:17 NKJV] 17 The first [one] to plead his cause [seems] right, Until his neighbor comes and examines him.

That means there are two sides to every story – actually three sides

What person A says

What person B says

Then you have the truth – somewhere in between

One of these women is a liar

So what is King Solomon to do –

This is like an unsolvable puzzle

23 And the king said, "The one says, 'This [is] my son, who lives, and your son [is] the dead one'; and the other says, 'No! But your son [is] the dead one, and my son [is] the living one.' " 24 Then the king said, "Bring me a sword." So they brought a sword before the king.

Now, we are not told how long it took for them to bring the sword to Solomon –

It could have been there in the room or it could have been a few minutes before the sword got there.

So we don't know what the women were thinking.

25 And the king said, "Divide the living child in two, and give half to one, and half to the other." 26 Then the woman whose son [was] living spoke to the king, for she yearned with compassion for her son; and she said, "O my lord, give her the living child, and by no means kill him!" But the other said, "Let him be neither mine nor yours, [but] divide [him]." 27 So the king answered and said, "Give the first woman the living child, and by no means kill him; she [is] his mother."

Had you make a note of Solomon's request

Bring me a sword –

Solomon asked for a literal sword –

And the literal sword revealed the hearts of the women

The literal sword revealed who was being truthful and who was lying

The one that was truthful – don't do anything to the child – she would rather have the other woman take her child than to have the child cut in half

The one that was lying – go ahead - cut the baby in half and give me my half.

I want to remind us that, Paul, in Ephesians 6 – refers to the Word of God as the sword of the Spirit

So the application for us – is that when we are faced with these types of dilemmas,

We need to cry out like Solomon, bring me the sword

What does God's Word have to say about the matter?

Whether someone is asking for our opinion or asking for counseling or asking for advice or the most serious life issue that person may ever have

Our response should always be, bring me the sword.

[Heb 4:12 NKJV] 12 For the word of God [is] living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

And how many times have we made the mistake of trying to give advice or give our opinion without ever seeking His word first.

Church I am not here to give opinions

It is ok to say to someone – I don't want to give you my opinion because I would much rather give you God's Word.

This world has plenty of opinions to offer

We need to be like Solomon

Bring me a sword

And of course, once we seek God's word on the matter, once we know what He thinks about the situation – He reveals the solution.

Don't you think that it was pretty dumb for the lying woman to say, go ahead and give me my half???

But that is what man's opinion sounds compared to His Word.

So heartless!

But given the right test – her heart was revealed.

28 And all Israel heard of the judgment which the king had rendered; and they feared the king, for they saw that the wisdom of God [was] in him to administer justice.

The fear they showed was the reverential awe that comes when you marvel at something.

The people realized Solomon possessed a level of wisdom well beyond his years.

It made them all the more ready to yield to his rule as king.

I want to finish with this –

We know what Solomon asked for in his dream

We might think it would be pretty great if God appeared to us as He did to Solomon and ask us what we want from Him

But you know what, while God doesn't appear to us in a vision or dream, we have that same choice every day

In fact, we have that same choice every time we chose

By His grace, may we choose wisely! MAY WE CHOOSE HIM!!!!

Let's pray...

To Receive Christ do the following:

Admit, "I am a sinner."

Confess and be willing to turn from your sin.

Believe, by faith that Jesus Christ died for you on the cross.

Receive, through prayer, Jesus Christ into your heart and receive eternal life.

Dear Lord Jesus,

I know that I am a sinner and need Your forgiveness. I believe that You died on the cross for my sins. Please forgive me for my sins and cleanse me by Your blood. I accept You by faith as my personal Lord and Savior. Give me a thirst for Your Word and Help me to follow You all of my days. In Jesus' name I pray, Amen.

May the LORD bless you and protect you.

May the LORD smile on you and be gracious to you.

May the LORD show you his favor and give you his peace.'

