

HOW THEN SHALL WE LIVE? WISELY!

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Scripture: 1 Kings 3:16-28

¹⁶Then two women who were harlots came to the king and stood before him (i.e. Solomon). ¹⁷The one woman said, "Oh my Lord, this woman and I live in the same house; and I gave birth to a child while she was in the house. ¹⁸It happened on the third day after I gave birth, that this woman also gave birth to a child, and we were together. There was no stranger with us in the house, only the two of us in the house. ¹⁹This woman's son died in the night, because she lay on it. ²⁰So she arose in the middle of the night and took my son from beside me while your maidservant slept, and laid him in her bosom, and laid her dead son in my bosom. ²¹When I rose in the morning to nurse my son, behold, he was dead; but when I looked at him carefully in the morning, behold, he was not my son, whom I had borne." ²²Then the other woman said, "No! For the living one is my son, and the dead one is your son." But the first woman said, "No! For the living one is my son, and the dead one is your son." But the first woman said, "No! For the dead one is your son, and the living one is my son." Thus they spoke before the king.

²³Then the king said, "The one says, 'This is my son who is living, and your son is the dead one'; and the other says, 'No! For your son is the dead one, and my son is the living one.'" ²⁴The king said, "Get me a sword." So they brought a sword before the king. ²⁵The king said, "Divide the living child in two, and give half to the one and half to the other." ²⁶Then the woman whose child was the living one spoke to the king, for she was deeply stirred over her son and said, "Oh, my lord, give her the living child, and by no means kill him." But the other said, "He shall be neither mine nor yours; divide him!" ²⁷Then the king said, "Give the first woman the living child, and by no means kill him. She is his mother." ²⁸When all Israel heard of the judgment which the king had given, they were in awe of him, because they saw that the king had in him the wisdom of God for giving right judgment.

When we look at a passage like this, it's astonishing. The kind of wisdom that Solomon brought to bear on this situation to be able to find out who was the mother; where did compassion lie; who couldn't bear the thought of her son being killed? We ask ourselves often, and I have too, how and where did he get this wisdom? If we look at chapter 4:29, it tells us that God gave it to him.

²⁹Now God gave Solomon wisdom and very great discernment and breadth of mind, like the sand that is on the seashore. ³⁰Solomon's wisdom surpassed the wisdom of all the sons of the east and all the wisdom of Egypt. ³¹For he was wiser than all men, than Ethan the Ezrahite, Heman, Calcol and Darda, the sons of Mahol; (obviously these were wise men) and his fame was known in all the surrounding nations. ³²He also spoke 3,000 proverbs, and his songs were 1,005. ³³He spoke of trees, from the cedar that is in Lebanon even to the hyssop that grows on the wall; he spoke also of animals and birds and creeping things and fish. (there was no subject it seems that Solomon didn't have wisdom. That was the scope and breadth of the knowledge that he possessed). ³⁴Men came from all peoples to hear the wisdom of Solomon, from all the kings of the earth who had heard of his wisdom.

Incredible! 3,000 proverbs; written over a thousand songs. It makes you wonder why God would endow him with this kind of wisdom. How did he get this kind of wisdom? And the very simple and yet, eloquent answer is that he asked for it. that's all! He asked for wisdom. If you look back at the 3:5, it says in Gibeon, the Lord appeared to Solomon in a dream at night and God said: Ask what you wish me to give you.

v. 9-10 "So give your servant an understanding heart to judge your people, to discern between good and evil. For who is capable of judging this great people of Yours."

v.12 God says, "Behold I have done according to your words. I have given you a wise and discerning heart. So that there has been no one like you before you, nor shall one like you arise after you."

As we look at our world and the decisions that we make, we ask ourselves or sometimes wish we had the wisdom of Solomon; wish we could make decisions like he did with such wisdom. Yet, the biblical truth about that kind of pondering is that it is possible. James tells us in 1:5, "*If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all generously and without reproach, and it will be given to him.*"

If any of you lacks wisdom today, all you need to do is to ask God, and God gives liberally without reproach to whoever needs it. Just ask. We look at the world that we live in, we look at the decisions that we need to make every day, the kind of calls that we need to take, the people we're called to believe or shouldn't believe in. We know that we live in a time where wisdom is premium. We need it for it gets so difficult to discern right from wrong, truth from lie. Jesus Himself said many times during His sojourn here on earth. He said, "You're living in difficult times, and the times will get more difficult. It will get more and more difficult to delineate between truth and lie."

Matthew 13:24-30

The kingdom of heaven is like a man who sowed good seed in his field. But while his men were sleeping, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went away. But when the wheat sprouted and produced a crop, then the tares also appeared. So the servants of the landowner came and said to him, "Sir, did you now sow good seed in your field? How then does it have tares?" and he said to them, "An enemy has done this!"

We know that Satan's main agenda is he hasn't stopped salvation from coming your way, is to somehow corrupt you in such a way that God's purposes don't get fulfilled. And how does he do that? he confuses. Jesus is saying that while you try to live the kingdom values, the enemy is out to prevent you from doing that. maybe to make you act hastily, or prematurely, to trip you up. That's his agenda. And the only way we can live along with those tares is with Godly wisdom. Because Jesus said: He's not going to take the tares away; they're going to be there. and only at the end will we deal with the tares. So you and I are called to grow in the midst of these things that can try to suffocate us. The only way to exist in that space is to have wisdom from God.

Jesus also said in Matthew 7:15 "Beware of the false prophets who come to you in sheep's clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves." That's where we get that familiar phrase – wolf in sheep's clothing. There's a camouflage that is used that may prevent us from knowing whether this is truly sheep of God's pasture or not. What do false prophets do? They try to deceive us from the Word. A false prophet is the one who professes to speak for that which God has spoken, but actually they do not.

Look at these scriptures that warn us about these false prophets.

Peter says: "But there were false prophets also among the people even as there shall be false teachers among you who secretly shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that brought them in and bring upon themselves swift destruction." People will come to confuse with different philosophies and heresies.

John says: "Beloved, believe not every spirit but try the spirits whether they are of God, because many false prophets are gone out into the world." Be careful.

2 Timothy: "For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine. But after their own lust shall they heap to themselves teachers having itching ears." In other words, people will be so

deceived that they will go to find bible teachers who will authenticate their lifestyle, rather than have the bible authenticated. Such deception is prevalent in our world today.

Jesus also said: “Watch out for shepherds who look like shepherds who are not; who come in to steal, to kill, to destroy; who don’t have kingdom interests at heart. they jump over the fence and try and mingle with the sheep.” Beloved, that’s the world that we live in. Satan’s agenda is to keep you away from truth and to make you believe in lies, false philosophies that have nothing to do with Jesus. In fact, false prophets will not have Jesus at the center. There is no Christology for them. If you take Jesus out of our faith, there is not faith.

Twice, Paul told the Galatians: “If anybody is preaching to you a gospel other than what you accepted, let them be under God’s curse. There is only one gospel and that is the message of Jesus’ death and resurrection.” 1 Corinthians. Any other so-called gospels must be rejected. I would say to you as you listen to what is preached from this pulpit – check your scriptures; go back and see if what was said is right. Be like the Bareans who went back to scripture to make sure that it was kosher, it was right. Because that is the kind of day in which we live.

Peter said: “There will be false teachers among you. They will secretly introduce destructive heresies, even denying he Sovereign Lord who bought them, bringing swift destruction on themselves. Many will follow their depraved conduct and will bring the way of truth into disrepute. In their greed, these teachers will exploit you with fabricated stories. Their condemnation has long been hanging over them and their destruction has not been sleeping.

We look at the world around us and look at some of the choices that are having to be made today, where truth has been completely obliterated. You don’t know who to believe, what to believe. And into this kind of scenario, beloved, we think of Solomon and the wisdom that he had, and the fact that he asked for it and he got it. And that’s all there is to it – to be able to know how to traverse the time that we have on earth in a way in which God’s kingdom and His values are followed. The one thing we need is Godly wisdom. Freely, He says, He will give.

I don’t know where you are this morning. Maybe today you’re in a bind, between a rock and a hard place and not knowing what to do. Just don’t know what to do, beloved, ask God for wisdom. Maybe you’re trying to make a career change or a hard decision that needs to be made. You’re not sure. It’s confusing. Ask God for wisdom. Maybe today you’re trying to determine between truth and lie about a particular situation or person; and you don’t know, you can’t make up your mind. Ask God for wisdom. He will give without reproach, liberally.

Maybe today, you’re trying to live the Christian life in a very hostile environment. Maybe it’s not easy, in the place that you are, to have Christian values. You’ve been derided, mocked; it’s difficult. You’re crying out to God and saying: Lord, how do I live as salt and light in this place? Ask God for wisdom. The bible says that if any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God who gives to all liberally and without reproach. And it will be given to you. There’s no doubt about it. There’s no condition there, it will be given to you.

So wherever you are this morning, in whatever situation you’re finding yourself in, floundering maybe, confused, need clarity, don’t know what is the truth and what is a lie, what to believe! Maybe you’ve been caught up in some kind of philosophy that sounded so nice. Today, you’re not sure what to do. Ask God for His wisdom and He’ll give it to you. Simple! Just ask Him and He will give.

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