

The title of this morning's sermon is, "*A Glimpse of Jesus' Wisdom.*"

You know I like types, and Solomon is one of the clearest types of Christ in the Old Testament.

The glory of the kingdom Solomon rules over prefigures or foreshadows the glory of the kingdom that Jesus rules over.

We are going to be in **1 Kings 3**, but briefly look at **1 Kings 10:23**.

Jesus said the Old Testament is about Him. As we read these three verses look for Jesus in them...

1 Kin 10:23 Thus King Solomon excelled all the kings of the earth in riches and in wisdom. 24 And the whole earth sought the presence of Solomon to hear his wisdom, which God had put into his mind. 25 Every one of them brought his present, articles of silver and gold, garments, myrrh, spices, horses, and mules, so much year by year.

It looks like the world is worshiping him:

- The whole earth seeks his presence
- Everyone wants to hear his wisdom
- Although he's already unimaginable wealthy, people still brings him gifts and offerings

So although the verses are about Solomon, they prefigure Jesus reigning over his kingdom.

Speaking of the whole earth coming to hear Solomon's wisdom, Jesus said...

Matt 12:42 The queen of the South will rise up at the judgment with this generation and condemn it, for she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon, and behold, something greater than Solomon is here.

Jesus condemned the generation in His day by pointing out that His wisdom is greater than Solomon's, so if the Queen of Sheba wanted to listen to Solomon, how much more should they want to listen to Him?

In this morning's verses in **1 Kings 3** we'll see a demonstration of Solomon's wisdom that prefigures the greater wisdom of Christ.

I've told you before that trials are tests, and tests are trials. God gives us wisdom so we can navigate trials, or pass the tests we face.

In our last sermon on the first half of **1 Kings 3** we saw Solomon ask for wisdom and receive it. In this morning's sermon we will see him apply his new wisdom to pass the test he's facing.

Look with me at **1 Kings 3:16**...

1 Kings 3:16 Then two prostitutes came to the king and stood before him. **17** The 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. **18** Then on the third day after I gave birth, this woman also gave birth. And we were alone. There was no one else with us in the house; only we two were in the house. **19** And this woman's son died in the night, because she lay on him. **20** And she arose at midnight and took my son from beside me, while your servant slept, and laid him at her breast, and laid her dead son at my breast. **21** When I rose in the morning to nurse my child, behold, he was dead. But when I looked at him closely in the morning, behold, he was not the child that I had borne.” **22** But the other woman said, “No, the living child is mine, and the dead child is yours.” The first said, “No, the dead child is yours, and the living child is mine.” Thus they spoke before the king.

They lived in the same brothel with other harlots, became pregnant around the same time, and their lives created messy situations for them...

Without husbands around there were no witnesses to what took place. It was simply one woman's word against the other which made it seem impossible to resolve. This prevented the situation from being tried in courts the normal way. More than likely this is why it reached Solomon.

So let's see what Solomon does...

1 Kings 3:23 Then the king said, “The one says, ‘This is my son that is alive, and your son is dead’; and the other says, ‘No; but your son is dead, and my son is the living one.’” **24** And the king said, “Bring me a sword.” So a sword was brought before the king. **25** And the king said, “Divide the living child in two, and give half to the one and half to the other.”

Although this sounds outrageous to us, there was precedent for something like this in the law...

Exodus 21:35 “When one man's ox butts another's, so that it dies, then they shall sell the live ox and share its price, and the dead beast also they shall share...or cut it in half.

So they would hear Solomon and think, “*Wow, he's doing w/ the baby what they would do w/ animals!*”

Since this situation seemed unresolvable, Solomon needed wisdom. He set a great example for us when he said, “*Bring me a sword.*”

And this brings us to Lesson 1...

LESSON ONE: CLING TO THE SWORD WHEN YOU NEED WISDOM.

We've talked about types many times before. Typically we're talking about types of Christ, but there are types of other things as well. For example, leprosy and leaven are types – or pictures – of sin.

There are also types – or pictures – of the Word of God...

Psa 119:105 Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.

A lamp is a picture of the Word.

A sword is probably the most common type – or picture – of the Word...

Ephesians 6:17 The sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

Jesus strikes down His enemies w/ a sword that proceeds from His mouth, ...

Rev 19:15 From his mouth comes a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations, and he will rule them with a rod of iron...21 The rest were slain by the sword that came from the mouth of him who was sitting on the horse.

He doesn't literally have a sword coming out of His mouth, but it's a picture of the Word of God.

When Solomon needed wisdom he looked for a sword and we should do the same.

We shouldn't expect God to speak to us audibly like He did w/ people before the Word of God was completed. Instead we should expect God to speak to us – or direct us – through His Word.

Generally when we're trying to figure out what to do in our lives, if we will spend the necessary time in God's Word we'll find the wisdom needed to make the right decision.

Let me give you another illustration I like that I hope you'll take with you...

When one of David's Mighty Men when was fighting...

2 Samuel 23:9 Among the three mighty men was Eleazar...He was with David when they defied the Philistines who were gathered there for battle, and the men of Israel withdrew. 10 He rose and struck down the Philistines until his hand was weary, and HIS HAND CLUNG TO THE SWORD. And the Lord brought about a great victory that day.

God was able to bring about a great victory through Eleazar b/c he clung on to his sword so long his hand stuck to it.

This is a great picture of what our relationships to the Word should be like. We aren't fighting physical battles, but we are fighting spiritual battles and we should cling to the Word of God like Eleazar clung to his sword.

Eleazar – like the rest of David's Mighty Men knew how to use their swords – or they wouldn't have been too mighty.

The same thing can be said of us. We won't be too mighty if we aren't skilled w/ our swords.

How do we develop this skill?

It takes things:

1. First, it takes practice. We must spend time reading and studying our Bibles.
2. Second, it takes experience. They used their swords regularly throughout their lives...and it's the same w/ us. We need to use our Bibles and apply what we read and study. What good is it to know the Bible if we're not going to follow it?

Let's go back to the account with Solomon.

Of course Solomon had no intention of cutting the child in half. He knew the child's mother would object. And that's what happened...

1 Kings 3:26 Then the woman whose son was alive said to the king, because her heart yearned for her son, "Oh, my lord, give her the living child, and by no means put him to death." But the other said, "He shall be neither mine nor yours; divide him."

There are some evil people and when they suffer they want others to suffer too. If they lose something they want others to lose the same thing.

This mother lost her child and she wanted the other mother to lose hers.

1 Kings 3:27 Then the king answered and said, "Give the living child to the first woman, and by no means put him to death; she is his mother." 28 And all Israel heard of the judgment that the king had rendered, and they stood in awe of the king, because they perceived that the wisdom of God was in him to do justice.

This really makes Solomon look like Jesus who, according to **Luke 2:40**, was filled with wisdom.

If you write in your Bible circle the words **the wisdom of God was in him** and write, "**1 Cor 1:24**," which says Jesus is **the wisdom of God**.

Let me get you to think about something...

Solomon couldn't use the women's words to determine the right thing to do. It was one woman's words against the other, and they were saying the same thing.

So if he wasn't going to examine their words what would he examine?

He had to examine their hearts!

This is what he did. After he told the story **verse 26** says **her heart yearned for her son**. He was able to see the heart of this woman for her son.

Briefly look at **verse nine**. Solomon said he wanted to be able to **discern between good and evil**, and that's what his wisdom allowed him to do. He was able to see the good of one mother and the evil of the other.

Solomon asked for a sword and in a sense his story acted like a sword that split these two women and revealed their hearts.

This is very fitting b/c we're told in the NT that a sword does exactly what Solomon did and exposes the heart.

If you write in your bible you can circle the word **sword** and write, "*Hebrews 4:12-13.*"

Then go ahead and turn to these verses. We won't turn back to **1 Kings 3**.

Heb 4:12 For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart.

We could say this is exactly what we saw Solomon do.

13 And no creature is hidden from his sight, but all are naked and exposed to the eyes of him to whom we must give account.

The main point of these verses is the Word of God is able to look at, or cut to, the heart.

And this brings us to lesson two...

LESSON TWO: THE WORD IS A SWORD THAT CUTS TO THE HEART.

Solomon demonstrates a good approach to counseling. Try to look past people's words to their hearts.

Pro 20:5 The purpose in a man's heart is like deep water, but a man of understanding will draw it out.

Solomon was able to do this – he was able to draw out the truth – b/c he was **a man of understanding** and wisdom.

This is one more way Solomon looks like Jesus. He did w/ these women what Jesus does w/ us.

Before I explain this, let me briefly share something...

I'm always learning new things as I study God's Word. Even verses I consider myself familiar with, the more I study them, the more new things I learn.

But it's not often that I'm studying and am confronted with something that causes me to see a verse – or verses – completely differently.

A few years ago when I studied **Heb 4:12** this took place. I previously believed the phrase **word of God** was referring to Scripture and not the personal or divine **Word of God**, Jesus Christ, which is what most people believe. As I studied the verse I became convinced that it's about Jesus.

Whenever we come to God's Word we need to be aware that some of our beliefs could be wrong. None of us are perfect theologians who have it all figured out.

Sometimes we'll hear things so many times we'll accept it as fact when it might not be true...which I think is the case w/ this verse.

So I have one request...

Be open to what I share about this verse and consider whether the commonly held view is wrong.

Here's why I think it is...

First, notice **verse 13** begins with the word **And** showing it flows from **verse 12**, or continues the thought from **verse 12**, and it uses the words **Him** and **His**, b/c the author of Hebrews is talking about a Person...versus Scripture itself.

Second, the context – the verses before and after – are about Jesus:

- The previous verses are about the greater rest we can have in Christ.
- Then **verse 14** begins with the words **14 Since then we have a great high priest**...showing he had been talking about this great high priest in verses 12 and 13...versus Scripture.

Third, the end of **verse 13** says **naked and exposed to the eyes of him to whom we must give account**.

This is about us being judged, and we are judged AGAINST scripture, but we aren't judged BY scripture.

- Scripture is the standard by which we're judged, but we don't stand before Scripture someday
- It's not Scripture sitting on the Judgment Seat of Christ or on the Great White Throne.

Instead, everyone is judged by Christ...

John 5:22 the Father judges no one, but has committed all judgment to the Son.

The reason we might struggle w/ this referring to Jesus is we generally think of **John 1:1** as the place presenting Jesus as the Word of God...

John 1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

But Hebrews also begins by presenting Jesus as the Word of God...

Heb 1:1 Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, 2 but in these last days he has SPOKEN TO US BY HIS SON, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world.

Instead of saying spoken to us THROUGH His Son – as though Jesus is the Messenger – it says **BY HIS SON**, as though Jesus is the message, or the Word of God.

Also, just to let you know there are many commentators that see this referring to Jesus:

- John Owen said, *“I judge therefore that it is the Person of Christ who is here spoken of. The attributes [in verse 12] properly belong to [Him], and cannot directly be ascribed to [Scripture].”*
- The Moody Bible Commentary says, *“This fits the context...as Jesus, the Word, is living, active, sharp, piercing and thus will judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart.”*
- Lenski said, *“The idea that this refers to the Son, the personal Word, as it does in John 1:1 is advocated by some of the Greek and a number of Latin fathers.”*
- Ellicott said, *“Outside the writings of [John’s Gospel where the Word of God is a title for Jesus] there is no passage in the New Testament in which the word of God is as clearly invested with personal attributes as here [in Hebrews].”*

In other words, there are no places in Scripture that discuss Scripture doing what these verses say. For example...

The end of **verse 12** says the Word of God **[discerns] the thoughts and intents of the heart.**

Who or what does this?

In **Rev 2:23** Jesus said, **“I am he who searches mind and heart.”**

He does what the verse says.

John 2:24 Jesus...KNEW ALL PEOPLE 25 and needed no one to bear witness about man, for HE HIMSELF KNEW WHAT WAS IN MAN.

Jesus looks deeply into all of us to see our hearts.

This is exactly what Solomon did with the two harlots.

Now speaking of the harlots, let me get you to think of something...

I doubt this was the first instance of Solomon using the wisdom God gave him. But we don't know what other feats of wisdom may have preceded or followed this one. We simply know this is the display of Solomon's wisdom God wanted to highlight for some reason, which makes it important.

The part that's surprising – or perhaps even shocking – is that it's an account involving two harlots.

In **1 Kings 3:12** God said to Solomon **none like you has been before you and none like you shall arise after you.**

Since Solomon is the greatest king in the world - there hadn't been anyone like him, and there wouldn't be anyone like him - when two prostitutes approached him he could have told someone below him to settle the issue. In other words, this looked like it's beneath him.

This shows that Solomon made himself available to everyone, regardless of their status in life. And this is another way Solomon looked like Jesus.

And this brings us to lesson three...

LESSON THREE: ANYONE CAN APPROACH JESUS' THRONE.

My suspicion is if this was an account of two wealthy, or powerful, or famous, people approaching Solomon it would communicate something unfortunate: that only certain people can approach the king.

Instead, Solomon looks very much like Jesus in that anyone could approach Him...

Luke 15:1 The tax collectors and sinners were all drawing near to hear him. **2** And the Pharisees and the scribes grumbled, saying, "This man receives sinners and eats with them."

If people don't draw near to Christ, it's not b/c the Son wouldn't let them approach.

When these women approached Solomon he was able to demonstrate his wisdom.

Jesus is greater than Solomon, so look a few verses later in **Hebrews 4:16** to see what we receive when we approach Him ...

Hebrews 4:16 Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

When we approach Jesus we are able to receive two things...

- We **receive mercy.**
- We **find grace.**

The way this is worded is very fitting...

First, since we're sinners, **mercy** is what we need to **receive**.

- **Mercy** means not receiving the punishment we deserve.
- Considering all the sins we've committed and the punishment we deserve as a result, there's nothing we could ever need to **receive** more than **mercy**!

Second, it says we **find grace**.

- **Grace** is unmerited favor...
- **Grace** is receiving kindness we haven't earned.

This is why it's worded so perfectly: since we can't earn **grace** all we can do is find it!

Jesus said, referring to himself...

Matt 12:42 The queen of the South will rise up at the judgment with this generation and condemn it, for she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon, and behold, something greater than Solomon is here.

Harlots were able to approach Solomon when they needed help; they were able to go to Solomon during their time of need.

Since Jesus is greater than Solomon, how much more confident should we be going to Christ and how much more should we expect to receive from Him.