

Unbelievable

Episode 2: The Brain That Wouldn't Die!

INTRODUCTION - The Value of Wisdom

Proverbs 2:6; 4:7-8

THE STORY - Reading People, Loving Others

1 Kings 3, 8, & 11

- CONTEXT: David is dead and Solomon, David's son by Bathsheba, is King of Israel.
- MARRIAGE ALLIANCE: Despite the clear teaching of Torah (Exodus 23:32-33; 34:12-16; Deuteronomy 7:3-4), Solomon's first move is to use marriage to build alliances with foreign kingdoms (3:1-2), a move which technically obeys the letter of the law (marrying an Egyptian had not been specifically forbidden), but misses the spirit. This becomes a foreshadow of his "Achilles' heel".
- WISDOM: Because Solomon (for the most part) follows God's ways, God tells Solomon he can ask for anything he wants and God will grant it. Solomon asks for wisdom and, because he asks with a heart in tune with God's heart, God gives him that and more.
- ONE OF MY FAVOURITE OLD TESTAMENT SCENES: Two women both claim to be the mother of one baby and ask Solomon to decide between them. He discerns who the real mother is in a scene of shrewd creativity.
- DECEPTION: Is lying / deception / pretending sometimes morally acceptable?
- BUILDING GOD'S TEMPLE: Solomon builds a worship centre for God - one that will function as a symbol of Jesus and later his people.
- SOLOMON'S ACHILLES' HEEL: Again, despite the clear teaching of Torah (Exodus 23:32-33; 34:12-16; Deuteronomy 7:3-4; 17:16-17), Solomon amasses excessive wealth and marries multiple foreign women. Eventually the promise of Scripture comes true - Solomon loses his loyalty to God and all Israel suffers the consequences.
- A DIVIDED KINGDOM: Because of Solomon's selfish heart, Israel enters into prolonged struggle and division into two kingdoms - Israel to the north and Judah to the south.

LOOKING DEEPER - Reading Below The Lines

TAKE OUT #1 - WISDOM IS THREE-DIMENSIONAL. IT FUNCTIONS "ABOVE THE PAGE". IT MAKES DECISIONS BY EXAMINING HEARTS RATHER THAN FACTS.

Bible stories and Bible rules are not meant to be mindlessly copied or obeyed. All narratives and laws point to principles that are found in Christ.

John 8:2-11

TAKE OUT #2 - OUR PRAYERS ARE ANSWERED WHEN WE ASK WITH THE HEART OF GOD TOWARD OTHERS.

Why did God grant Solomon wisdom AND more? Because his heart was ready for the responsibility, demonstrated in his other-centredness.

John 14:13-14; Matthew 21:22

TAKE OUT #3 - GOD'S PEOPLE SHOULD AVOID COVENANTS OF VULNERABILITY WITH NON-BELIEVERS.

Like Israel, Christ-followers should be open-hearted people. But that means we must also protect our hearts from paradoxical situations - ones where we must simultaneously struggle to guard and give our heart in the same relationship.

Exodus 23:32-33; 34:12-16; Deuteronomy 7:3-4; 2 Corinthians 6:14

TAKE OUT #4 - SIN AVOIDANCE SHOULD NOT BE OUR PRIMARY GOAL. FOLLOWING GOD'S HEART IS. JESUS IS OUR EXAMPLE.

Why is Solomon rebuked for not being devoted to the LORD "as David his father had been", when David's life was also marked by extreme sins?

1 Kings 11:4-9; 1 Peter 1:15-16; Luke 7:34-35; Matthew 23:24

CONCLUSION - Wisdom Is Worth Asking For

James 1:5

HOME CHURCH QUESTIONS

WARMING UP...

1. After briefly reviewing this week's message, share one new thing you learned or one thing that most challenged, convicted, or encouraged you.

LOOK TO THE BOOK...

2. Read 1 Kings 11:1-14. a) What verse stands out to you the most in this passage? Why? b) Solomon's "Achilles' heel" seemed to be women. For us, this might translate that our weakness is sex, or poor judgement in choosing partners, or just a low tolerance for aloneness causing us to despise our singleness rather than serve God fully in it. Can you relate to Solomon's weakness in any way? Talk about it. c) David was guilty of adultery and murder, and yet he is remembered in this passage as a man whose heart was exemplary. How is this possible? d) So, David's heart was basically God-ward focussed, but he repeatedly got himself into terrible trouble. Solomon's heart may have started out like David's, but became increasingly ego-centric and less inclined to put God first. The question is, who do you relate to most? Why? e) Notice God speaks directly to Solomon in this chapter (and elsewhere), something that is not recorded as happening to any other King of Israel, even David. Are there any transferable lessons in this for us? Think about it. [Elders, feel free to call me.] :o)

SO WHAT?...

3. Wisdom is a gift from God (Proverbs 2:6), but it is also our responsibility to get (Proverbs 4:7-8). a) How can both be true? b) Read James 1:5. What area in your life do you tend to lack the wisdom you need? Pray for it together.

Bruxy Cavey @ THE MEETING HOUSE - Sunday, July 16 / 23, 2006