

# First Baptist Church Smiths Falls

May 20, 2018

**Scripture:** 1 Kings 3:16-26 (NIV)

16 Now two prostitutes came to the king and stood before him. 17 One of them said, "Pardon me, my lord. This woman and I live in the same house, and I had a baby while she was there with me. 18 The third day after my child was born, this woman also had a baby. We were alone; there was no one in the house but the two of us. 19 "During the night this woman's son died because she lay on him. 20 So she got up in the middle of the night and took my son from my side while I your servant was asleep. She put him by her breast and put her dead son by my breast. 21 The next morning, I got up to nurse my son—and he was dead! But when I looked at him closely in the morning light, I saw that it wasn't the son I had borne." 22 The other woman said, "No! The living one is my son; the dead one is yours." But the first one insisted, "No! The dead one is yours; the living one is mine." And so they argued before the king. 23 The king said, "This one says, 'My son is alive and your son is dead,' while that one says, 'No! Your son is dead and mine is alive.'" 24 Then the king said, "Bring me a sword." So they brought a sword for the king. 25 He then gave an order: "Cut the living child in two and give half to one and half to the other." 26 The woman whose son was alive was deeply moved out of love for her son and said to the king, "Please, my lord, give her the living baby! Don't kill him!" But the other said, "Neither I nor you shall have him. Cut him in two!"

**Congregational Prayer:** "Our Father"

Our Father, Which Art In Heaven, Hallowed Be Thy Name. Thy Kingdom Come. Thy Will Be Done, On Earth As It Is In Heaven. Give Us This Day, Our Daily Bread, And Forgive Us Our Trespases, As We Forgive Those Who Trespass Against Us. And Lead Us Not Into Temptation, But Deliver Us From Evil. For Thine Is The Kingdom, The Power And The Glory. Forever And Ever. Amen

**Message:** "3:16 Trail: Wisdom of Solomon"

Introduction:

- A young man asked his elderly grandfather this secret to his long life. The grandfather was quick to answer, saying, "Well, my boy, you see every day since I was your age I pour little bit of

gunpowder onto my breakfast cereal." The boy thought this was a great idea, so he decided to do the same practice, adding a little bit of gunpowder to his breakfast cereal every day of his life. And it was a long life – he lives to be well into his 90s. He left behind a loving wife. He left behind seven children. He left behind 27 grandchildren. And he left behind a 15 foot hole in the crematorium wall!

- So, let me ask you this, do you think it's wise to add gunpowder to your cereal? We are going to talk this week about the man who personified human wisdom – King Solomon.

Part 1: The 3:16 Trail

- Our 3:16 trail began more than a month ago, after we noticed that the third chapter and the 16<sup>th</sup> verse of many books of the Bible were highly significant. So, let's take a look back. We first looked at Genesis 3:16, we were amazed right away to see God's plan for salvation even in the midst of punishment. Then, we went to Exodus 3:16 and we saw that God watches over all things in our lives. Next we turned to Joshua 3:16, and saw a God of miracles as

the waters of the Jordan River stopped flowing as the people crossed on dry ground. In Judges 3:16 we saw apostasy and how God rescues us when we fail. Last week 1 Samuel 3:16 taught us about speaking the truth of God to our loved ones.

- And so, therefore, here we are in 1 Kings 3:16. Let me give you a little background. The prophet Samuel from last week's 3:16 trail went on to anoint the first Kings of Israel. The second king was the well-known king David – an ancestor to our saviour, Jesus Christ. David's son, Solomon, is new to the throne here as 1 King Chapter 3 begins. 1 King Chapter 1 is about how David chooses Solomon to be king instead of choosing Solomon's brother Adonijah. Chapter 2 is King David's commissioning to his son Solomon, followed by King Solomon setting up his throne, making him, undisputedly, the only king of Israel. Chapter 3 starts off with a legacy for Solomon that becomes his downfall: King Solomon kept the peace in his empire not through war, but through alliances and through strategic marriages. The first of which is mentioned as chapter 3 begins with Solomon marrying the Pharaoh's daughter

(v. 1), and is already showing signs of walking away from God (v. 3). In verse 5 Solomon is asked by God in a dream what he wants. So in verse nine he asked for a discerning heart – a heart of wisdom. In verse 12 God grants King Solomon his wish and gives to him a: “... *wise and discerning heart, so that there will never have been anyone like you, nor will there ever be...*”

- If God came before you right now, what would you ask of Him? If God came to you and said to you as he said to King Solomon, “*Ask for whatever you want of me to give you (v. 5).*”, what would you ask? Our God is a generous God who lavishly gives to those that He loves – to His beloved creation. Our God is a God a gifts. Our God is a God who is loving and joyful as He answers prayers. If God came to you right now and asked you what you would like to receive from Him, what would be your desire? I keep hearing a lot of people, even in the Church, saying that they want to win the lottery – as if an enormous dumping of cash would positively change their life. Is that what you would ask? Would you ask for youthful health? Would you ask for power? Or... What?

- What do you think of the answer that Solomon gave to God (verse 9)? He asked for a discerning heart. Is this a prayer that we too could copy? Is this how we too should come before God? Let me put it another way: have you ever asked God to teach you how to pray? Have you ever asked God to teach you how to read your Bible? Or asked God to teach how to be a better husband or wife, a better father or mother, a better family man or woman? Have you asked God to help you to be better at your job? Or to be a better citizen? Have you ever asked God to help you with your downtrodden neighbour who needs your help? Have you ever asked God to help you to use your money for his honour and for his glory? Have you ever asked God to help you to use your skills, gifts, and talents that He has given to you in His kingdom? What about when there is conflict – do you ask God to direct your words and your thoughts when someone else is picking on you, hurting you, trying to dissuade you? Do you ask God to help you to understand the world in which He has placed you, and your place in it, and how you should be living your life? When you go to vote,

as we shall be doing on June 7 and later again in the fall, do you ask God to direct you at the ballot box? Do you ask God to teach you to control your tongue? To control your hands? To control your mind and your thoughts? Do you ask God, as did King Solomon, to give you wisdom?

#### Part 2: Our 3:16 Trail

- So, here we are therefore adding another 3:16 verse from God's Word to our 3:16 trail. And in 1 Kings 3:16 we have this: "*Now two prostitutes came to the king and stood before him.*" Okay, we can all go home now, yes!?!? This is one of those 3:16 verses that of its own really does not give us a whole lot, but sets up an incredible story.
- If women were not considered to be highly respected in this society, and if an unmarried woman was considered to be less than a married woman, and if an unmarried woman was in the trade of using her body inappropriately, then, I would think, that these two women would not be held in very high regard. King Solomon, therefore, may well have just wanted to dismiss these two women

out-right. Do we too often prejudge people, and therefore miss out on opportunities to love and care for them?

- Have you ever thought of what a tough job it was for the king to listen to the complaints and problems of the people in much the same way as the judge do today? What an exhausting job! People have such wonderful, heart-wrenching stories, and some of them are actually true. But we do love to embellish, and we do love to make ourselves look better than others. Can you imagine sitting on your throne hour after hour, complaint after complaints from an entire kingdom? I would think that this could be quite mind-numbing.
- And yet, King Solomon did not dismiss these two women, nor did he see this as a regular opportunity. Instead, King Solomon saw this as an opportunity, a gift from God. Our everyday lives can presents many chances for us to grow in God, and to teach about our mighty God. The every day and the mundane may become a tedious example of repetition, or... you never know... you had better watch out. The boring may become the greatest opportunity

for you ever.

- 1 Kings 3:16 is therefore an opportunity for King Solomon. Two women have babies. One baby dies in the night. And an exchange happens. Now, I'm not a baby expert, but I knew my babies in the hospitals, I could tell my babies in a room full of babies, as could the mom whose baby was stolen. But the other mom just won't admit her fault, nor her responsibility. So they end up before King Solomon, who now has two women telling two different stories.
- Everybody understands what King Solomon was dealing with. We have all had two people who have come to us and expressed their version of the same story. And when it comes to stories like this, stories of "He said... She said..." there is rarely a winner. One person says one thing, and another person says another thing. And they believe what to say to be true, or they make it look like they believe that what they're saying is true, and there you are. Let me share with you one of things I've learned: in any interaction you will only hear 50% of any story – you only hear the words of the person that is before you speaking. But, keep in mind that you're

still not going to even get 50% – what that one person is saying to you has been filtered to their own experience. I have learned, as a minister, to listen to the words of that one person, but to only believe, or accept those words when I have heard the other side of the story. And even when you've heard the other side of the story, you might still be left with more questions than answers about what happened. And often the best thing that we can do is not make a judgment, not take a side, but simply be ready to listen.

- Just listening, though, was not an option for King Solomon. He was called to be the judge. One of these two women was the real mother to the surviving baby. The other one was a liar, thief, and a deceiver.
- It is clear that Solomon never intended on doing the grisly act to that baby (v. 24), but the reaction of those two women proved the point: the real mother was willing to give up her baby, while the deceiver showed her true colours by insisting that neither should have the surviving baby. And justice and truth reigned.

Part Three: What of Us Today?

- So what should we take from the story today? Should we just be in awe of the wisdom of Solomon, and go home having heard a good story? What can we learn from the story that will make us different than how we walked into the room just a few minutes ago?
- Let me share with you a Bible passage that is so significant for us all this day: 1 Corinthians 14:33 (KJV): *“For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints.”* Our God is a God of light in the darkness. Our God is the God of truth. Our God is a God of peace. Our God is a God of discernment, of understanding, and, as we should talk about next week, is the God of all wisdom.
- Know this: if your life is full of fog, uncertainty, unrest, and a sense of hopelessness in the midst of disorder and chaos, the Lord God is there to lead you and direct you. Our God can take confusion and replace it with peace. Our God can take disorder and replace it with orderliness. Our God can take those trying times in your life, those times when two distinct opposite voices are yelling in your ears, and turn them into something amazing for His

kingdom.

- Are you looking for peace? Are you looking for order? Are you looking for wisdom and understanding? Are you getting run down with the things of this world that seemed to be so very difficult? Are you getting pulled in two different directions, and need discernment? Our God is not a God of chaos. Our God is not the author of confusion. Our God is not the God of disorder. Our God is the God of true peace.

Conclusion:

- I would not personally recommend a diet of gunpowder, whether you are thinking of cremation or not, I just don't think that would be very wise. But it would be wise for you to draw close to the living God, as did King Solomon, and call on Him to fill you with His wisdom.
- It's time to leave behind those things that are pulling you down, and to step from disorder and confusion into the glorious peace of the Lord, Jesus Christ.