

The Bulwark

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ESSENCE OF WISDOM

They were embroiled in a squabble over ownership of a dog that both were clearly attached. However, clear ownership of the dog could only be one, but who? The man filed a lawsuit claiming the woman (no relation to him) did indeed have his dog and he wanted it returned. Appearing in court, the woman affirmed that the dog was hers and told the judge exactly where she had purchased the animal. The man on his part offered his appeal as to the dog being his. The judge leaned back in his chair, stroked his chin, and asked that the leash be removed from the dog, which had been brought into the courtroom. Ownership of the animal was immediate, as it quickly made its way to the man, happily wagging his tail all the way. Clearly the judge harkened back to the wisdom of Solomon as seen in 1Kings 3:16-28 in order to render his decision.



Solomon, when he was but a young man, serving as king over Israel, had God appear to him and said, *“Ask what I shall give to you.”* (2Chronicles 1:7). Solomon’s response is seen in verses eight through ten, but notice especially verse ten. *“Give me now wisdom and knowledge, that I may go out and come in before the people; for who can rule this great people of Thine?”* Solomon didn’t ask for wealth or fame, however he was blessed with both. He asked for wisdom. Makes one wonder what you might have asked for if given that opportunity.

Wisdom is defined in the Merriam-Webster Dictionary as being, “ability to discern inner qualities and relationships; good sense; a wise attitude, belief or course of action; knowledge” Herbert Lockyer offers the following as the Bible definition of wisdom, “ability to judge correctly and to follow the best course of action, based on knowledge and understanding” Solomon on his part set about to define wisdom as seen in Proverbs 9:10. *“The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and knowledge of the Holy One is understanding.”* In the fourth chapter of Proverbs Solomon wrote, *“The beginning of wisdom is: Acquire wisdom; and with all your acquiring, get*

understanding.” (v 7)

Matthew Henry, in his commentary on the Psalms, attributes the 111th Psalm to David, the father of Solomon. Notice what is found in verse ten of that psalm. *“The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom; a good understanding have all those who do His commandments; His praise endures forever.”*

What is so striking is that both David and Solomon at times in their life struggled with proper application of wisdom. David seemed to do so more early in his life, then corrected himself. Whereas Solomon appeared to have set wisdom aside as he aged as evidenced in 1Kings 11:1-13 and it cost him greatly. Most assuredly, there are times when we struggle with the proper application of wisdom. We need to look at the

examples seen through out the Scripture and learn from the missteps of others and seek the way of true wisdom. *“For whatever was written in earlier times was written for our instruction, that through perseverance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope.”* (Romans 15:7)

“Oh the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and unfathomable His ways!” (Romans 11:33) What a beautiful expression of where one finds true riches. The riches that God offers through His wisdom is deeper than anyone could attain in this life. Search all you want, but you will never find the end thereof. James reminds all, in the first chapter of his epistle, *“But if any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all men generously and without reproach, and it will be given to him.”* (v. 5)

“Who among you is wise and understanding? Let him show by his good behavior his deeds in the gentleness of wisdom.” (James 3:13) *“But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, reasonable, full of mercy and good fruits, unwavering, without hypocrisy.”* (James 3:17) Our desire should be to embrace wisdom and then reflect such in the comportment of life. So, how wise are you really? (wbc)