

"From the cowardice that shrinks from new truth, from the laziness that is content with half-truths, from the arrogance that thinks it knows all truth, O, God of Truth, deliver us."



A Controversial Newsletter "The Printed Voice of Summit Theological Seminary"

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Vol. 30 No. 3

July 2017

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The Wisdom of Solomon

By Terry Carter

In **1 Kings 3:16-28** we read about an event that demonstrated the amazing wisdom that God had granted to King Solomon. Two harlots who lived together came to him with one son. They both claimed that the other had smothered their son while sleeping and switched the babies while the other slept. There was nobody else in the house but the two women and their sons.



How could Solomon possibly decide who was telling the truth and who was lying? Of course, Solomon said the child should be cut in half so that both would get their half of the living child. The one who was lying thought that was a good plan, but the real mother pleaded that the child be given to the other woman rather than killing him.

This event surely shows just how wonderful that Solomon's wisdom was. I can remember learning it as a small child myself. I remember being on the edge of my seat waiting to hear how he was going to decide such an impossible case. But there is much more to learn about here than just the extent of Solomon's wisdom.

It is clear to me that the woman who was lying was not interested in having the other woman's son for herself. She was perfectly content to let the child die. Obviously, she just couldn't bear to see the other woman with a son while she had none herself.

In other words, she thought, "If I can't have my son, she can't have hers!" But the true mother was passionate in her desire that the boy be allowed to live even if it meant that she was deprived of him as a son. That is, she was willing to sacrifice her own pleasure and satisfaction for the life and well-being of the child.

Solomon knew that this is how a true parent acts. They are not willing to use their child as a tool or pawn to inflict pain or punishment on another. What is best for the child is the most important thing to them. They do not use their child as a means of manipulating others.

I would like to make two applications here briefly:

1. When politicians are willing to divide the country rather than see their political opponents enjoy success, they are not the true guardians of our nation. Their own interests are more important to them than the good of the nation. We should never elect or re-elect such people to office.
2. When people are willing to split the Church rather than see it have success without them being in control, they are not the true guardians of the Lord's Body. They are self-willed and are more concerned about their own reputation, power, and position than the good of God's people. We should never follow such people. We should flee from them.

Paul warned the Ephesian elders that men would rise up even from among themselves who would draw disciples away after themselves. He said that such men were savage wolves who do not spare the flock. It was such an important issue to Paul that he warned them with tears for three years about this danger. **Acts 20:29-31**

Men like this don't care how many sheep they kill as long as they have their own flock. They are not building the Lord's Kingdom, but their own. When men draw sheep away from the flock, they don't care about the sheep or the flock. These men ought to be marked and avoided, not followed. **Romans 16:17-18**

In politics, we need to ask whether our leaders are more interested in the well-being of the country or their party. In the Church, we need to ask whether the men we listen to and follow are more interested in the well-being of the flock or are they satisfied to see it divided and destroyed.

Good and honest politicians want the country to prosper even if it means sacrifice for them or their party. True leaders in the Church want to see the body united and prospering even if it means personal sacrifice for them.

Proverbs 22:24-25, "24 Make no friendship with an angry man, and with a furious man do not go, 25 Lest you learn his ways and set a snare for your soul."