

THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION

The Books Of Kings: The Kings Of Israel And Judah From Solomon To The Babylonian Captivity

I. The United Kingdom, 1 Kings 1:1-11:43

C. Living In Wisdom Above Our Forefathers' Dysfunctions

(1 Kings 3:1-28)

Introduction: (To show the need . . .)

We can easily and unwisely adopt the dysfunctional thinking and behaviors of our forerunners and forefathers:

(1) It occurs in the federal government: Rich Lowry's column, "Schumer option is a dead end" (Republican-American, September 14, 2017, p. 6A) claimed that President "Trump's dalliance with Schumer [D-N.Y.] . . . only can add another layer of distrust and dysfunction" between the President and "the GOP leadership."

Yet, distrust and dysfunction afflicts the other party's leadership, too, for Mr. Lowry added that the President was teaming up "with perhaps the most deviously shrewd Democrat in the United States . . ." (Ibid.)

(2) It occurs at the grassroots level of society: (a) Diane Rinaldi Hawkins, a former Waterbury resident who moved to Port Orange, Florida, in a letter to the paper (Ibid.) wrote, "Many people at or near retirement age . . . come south to Florida with visions of sandcastles and flip flops in December," but "they should think twice," because "between Aug. 1 and Nov. 1, Florida residents live with the threat of death and destruction by hurricane."

However, in recent weeks, we have been reminded that much of the East Coast, including Connecticut, is also vulnerable to being hit by hurricanes, so one could fret about living anywhere along the East Coast!

(b) I recently heard of a man who had called a hotline for help, and he was distraught and hysterically crying because he had lost his wife in February, he was being evicted from his dwelling and he had lost his job.

No one can help losing a spouse in death, but financial gurus tell us that if one loses his job and faces eviction at the same time, poor thinking and management behaviors picked up in one's background are generally to blame.

Need: *So, we ask, "How can we wisely live above the dysfunctional behaviors of our forefathers?!"*

- I. As we before learned, Solomon in 1 Kings 2:1-46 heeded his father on unfinished business in his realm.
- II. However, though David was a good king, he was imperfect, so that following David's advice left Solomon also tending to follow his father's dysfunctional, unbiblical practices, 1 Kings 3:1-4:
 - A. Like his father David, Solomon married a foreign princess in violation of Scripture, 1 Kings 3:1:
 1. God's Word at Deuteronomy 7:3-4 forbade Israel from marrying pagans lest they adopt their foreign gods.
 2. However, David married Maacah, daughter of pagan king Talmi of the Gentile nation of Geshur (2 Sam. 3:3b) to enhance his political power. (Bible Know. Com., O. T., p. 459)
 3. Solomon similarly married the daughter of Egypt's Pharaoh to enhance his power, 1 Kings 3:1 ESV.
 - B. Due to David's failure fully to obey God on the issue, Solomon and Israel worshiped in pagan-like high places:
 1. God's Word at Leviticus 17:3-4 forbade Israel from worshiping God at any place other than the tabernacle.
 2. However, 1 Kings 3:2-3 reports that when Solomon rose to power, Israel's people along with Solomon worshiped on many high places like the pagans, and, to complicate the issue, the tabernacle and altar were then located at the pagan-like high place of Gibeon though the ark was at Jerusalem, 2 Chronicles 1:3-6.
 3. Yet, David had said God's house and altar were to be in Jerusalem with the ark, and he was even afraid to worship God at Gibeon since God had told him to sacrifice on the threshing floor of Arauna in Jerusalem, indicating that spot was where God wanted Israel to worship Him, 1 Chronicles 21:28-22:1; Ibid., p. 611.
 4. Thus, in **not having *moved* the tabernacle and altar to Jerusalem** in accord with God's revealed will, David had disobeyed the Lord, which disobedience had left the people of Israel and Solomon at the start of his reign tending to worship God in various pagan-like high places like Gibeon, 1 Kings 3:2-4.
- III. In grace, God came to Solomon at the Gibeon high place in a dream to offer him the blessing he desired, and Solomon wisely requested WISDOM he needed to rule since he was inexperienced, 1 Kings 3:5-9.
- IV. God complimented Solomon for his request that sought ISRAEL'S welfare over his own interests of a long life, wealth or victory over his foes, so He promised Solomon more wisdom than any other mortal in history along with riches and honor, and a long life providing he followed the Lord, 1 Kings 3:10-14.
- V. When Solomon awoke from his dream, he WISELY began to CORRECT an important ERROR he had copied from his father by worshiping the Lord where GOD WILLED -- at JERUSALEM, 1 Kings 3:15:
 - A. Solomon had just sacrificed a thousand burnt offerings to the Lord at the high place of Gibeon (1 Kings 3:4).
 - B. However, following God's revelation to him in the dream, Solomon left Gibeon for Jerusalem, 1 Kings 3:15a.

- C. There he stood before the ark and offered burnt and peace offerings to the Lord at the place of God's choosing, then hosted a feast for his servants in celebration of his fellowship with God, 1 Kings 3:15.
 - D. Clearly, the wisdom God had given him led Solomon to revere the Lord more (Proverbs 1:7), what in turn led him into fuller, more accurate obedience of God's Word in no longer worshiping at a pagan-like high place like Gibeon, but in Jerusalem where the Lord had revealed that He wanted His people to worship Him!
- VI. This wisdom was then seen in a court ruling by Solomon, leading the people to respect him, 1 K. 3:16-28:**
- A. In a case Solomon had to decide, two harlots disputed over whether the baby held in the arms of one woman was her baby or that of the other woman. One woman had killed her baby by carelessly laying on him when she slept, so she had secretly taken the other woman's baby as her own, 1 Kings 3:16-23.
 - B. Solomon gave a test to discern which woman was the real mother by ordering that a sword be brought to divide the living baby in two so that each woman might have half of the baby, 1 Kings 3:24-25.
 - C. The woman not holding the infant reacted by begging Solomon not to slay the child, but to give him to the other woman while the woman holding the baby agreed to have the baby divided, 1 Kings 3:26a,b!
 - D. Solomon ruled that the woman who pleaded to spare the infant was the mother due to the bond she had with him in caring for his life, so he ordered that the baby not be slain, but given to that woman, 1 Kings 3:27.
 - E. This ruling persuaded all Israel that Solomon had God's great insight and was to be respected, 1 Kings 3:28.
- VII. Significantly, Solomon's test in this case aligns with the Leviticus 22:28 call to have regard for the God-given bond that exists between parent and offspring in animals and man. (The Wycliffe Bible Com., 1971, p. 102) Solomon's test aimed to expose so as to honor that bond, and though we do not know if he thought of Leviticus 22:28 at the time, we know that if we apply Scripture, we will act wisely like he did!**

Lesson: *Solomon began his rule by adopting his father's good and dysfunctional behaviors, but by asking God for wisdom and being rewarded with it, he came to revere God more so as to heed Scripture better with great blessing.*

Application: *To live in wisdom above our forefathers' dysfunctional behaviors, (1) may we trust in Christ to be saved (John 3:16) and indwelt by the behavior-modifying Holy Spirit of God, the Spirit of wisdom, Galatians 5:16-23; Isaiah 11:2. (2) May we ask God for wisdom (James 1:5) and thereby (3) wisely gain a deeper reverence for the Lord (Proverbs 1:7) and hence (4) better understand and heed Scripture, (4) resulting in greater blessings.*

Conclusion: (To illustrate the message . . .)

All of the issues of dysfunction given in our introduction can be overcome by asking God for wisdom (James 1:5) so as better to revere Him (Proverbs 1:7) and thus better to obey His Word. We demonstrate this (as follows):

(1) Dysfunctional behavior in government is handled by (a) heeding Romans 13:1 to submit to all rulers as those who are allowed of God to rule, (b) knowing that in our era, Daniel 2:42-44a with Revelation 3:21 in light of Revelation 17:8-18 predicts that from our era to the Great Tribulation that comes after the Church is raptured, strong and weak government formats will exist and despotic rulers will rise by intrigue, oppressing many (what we now see!) Thus, (c) God's plan for our era via Revelation 3:21 with 7:17 is to use the era's affliction to direct oppressed people to the balm of His Word as expounded in Biblical churches. (d) Matthew 16:18 promises God will keep building His Church in our era, (e) so we should keep performing His ministry assignments, 1 Corinthians 15:58.

(2) On the matters of retiring and/or moving and/or avoiding hurricanes, (a) James 4:13-15 calls us not to change our job status or location on our own, but to follow God's lead on these matters, (b) and Acts 16:6-10 offers practical guidance that ***IF we serve God***, He circumstantially leads us to stay or to move by closing and opening doors of opportunity. Then, (c) wherever the Lord leads, we are to trust Him to supply our livelihood needs, Phil. 4:10-13.

(3) On the matter of the man who called the hotline, (a) if our spouse dies, we should apply Hebrews 13:5b to realize that God promises never to leave or forsake us, and if our spouse was a believer, that 2 Corinthians 5:1-8 reveals he or she at death was instantly taken into God's heavenly presence and will be resurrected. (b) On job losses or job insecurity and evictions from dwellings, (i) Proverbs 27:23-27 calls us financially to rely on reputable, stable income streams versus collected sums of money that can soon vanish. Then, (ii) Proverbs 24:30-34 calls us to stay diligent in our work with that income stream, for tiny increments of a lack of diligence in our work leads to sudden, catastrophic loss. Finally, (iii) Proverbs 24:27 notes that only **after** we establish income by a regular, stable income stream and are diligent in our work, managing our income well, should we **then** acquire a home, avoiding eviction!

May we trust in Christ for salvation. Then, may we like Solomon ask God for wisdom (James 1:5), what will lead us to revere the Lord and cause us more precisely to obey His Word for God's rich blessing.