

* These notes are provided for personal devotional and study purposes only. They may not be published, distributed, or disseminated to others without the permission of the author.

When God Speaks

Series: Divided Heart, Divided Nation

The Village Church at Shell Point

Evening Service

August 25, 2024

I. An Unusual Encounter

A. 1 Kings 3:1–5 (ESV) —

1. 1 Solomon made a marriage alliance with Pharaoh king of Egypt.
2. He took Pharaoh's daughter and brought her into the city of David until he had finished building his own house and the house of the LORD and the wall around Jerusalem.
3. 2 The people were sacrificing at the high places, however, because no house had yet been built for the name of the LORD.
4. 3 Solomon loved the LORD, walking in the statutes of David his father, only he sacrificed and made offerings at the high places.
5. 4 And the king went to Gibeon to sacrifice there, for that was the great high place.
6. Solomon used to offer a thousand burnt offerings on that altar.
7. 5 At Gibeon the LORD appeared to Solomon in a dream by night, and God said, "Ask what I shall give you."

B. Solomon has an unusual experience

1. Not very many people are appeared to by God
 - a. I've never had that experience
 - b. Probably most of you haven't either
2. Even unusual for Solomon
 - a. As you read the Bible, get the impression that God is appearing to a bunch of people all of the time
 - b. Not really the case
 - c. Only appeared to Solomon two or three times
 - (1) Here, at Gibeon
 - (2) After he finished building the temple – 1 Kings 9
 - (3) Then third time – 1 Kings 11
 - (a) This time because God was angry with Solomon
 - (b) This time for chastisement
 - d. Two appearances for Solomon would have been plenty

C. Maybe not be a bad idea that God doesn't appear to us after all

1. Might find out some things about ourselves we aren't prepared to acknowledge
2. Job
 - a. Afflicted by Satan with God's permission
 - (1) Without his realization

- b. Afflicted by his comforters
 - c. Midst of their attacks – demanded an audience with God
 - 3. Meeting with God wasn't what he anticipated
 - a. **Job 38:2–4** (ESV) — 2 “Who is this that darkens counsel by words without knowledge? 3 Dress for action like a man; I will question you, and you make it known to me. 4 “Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth? Tell me, if you have understanding.
- D. This episode with Solomon is a very positive experience
 - 1. The kind of meeting that we would all love to have
 - 2. Meets Solomon redemptively
 - a. “Ask what I shall give you.”
 - b. God gives Solomon carte blanche
- E. Nature of the encounter – dream
 - 1. Not the only way God speaks
 - 2. Job – whirlwind
 - 3. Elijah – still small voice
 - 4. John – vision while in the Spirit
- F. God speaks to us in different ways
 - 1. Circumstances
 - 2. Godly people with wisdom
 - 3. Scripture
 - a. Closest example – Halleck Rd house issues
 - b. Amos 5:11 ... *Though* you have built houses of well-hewn stone, Yet you will not live in them...
 - c. Not what that text means
 - (1) Not suggesting this as a Bible study method
 - (2) I'm suggesting that you not make this a Bible study method
 - d. In the context of what we were going through – captured my attention
 - 4. God moved us from that house before it was finished
 - a. He had other plans for us
 - b. Other plans for ministry
- G. Our desire is always to have God speak to us redemptively
 - 1. Not out of judgment or chastisement

II. **Prerequisites for Hearing God**

- A. **Genuine Affection**
 - 1. V 3 – “Solomon loved the Lord”
 - 2. Not just with a romantic, warm fuzzy kind of love
 - 3. Presumably responding to the Deuteronomic commands to love the Lord
 - a. **Deuteronomy 6:5** (ESV) —
 - (1) 5 You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might.
 - 4. 1 Kings as Deuteronomic history
 - a. Themes from Deuteronomy are frequently expressed

5. Loving God is one of the conditions for the blessings that Solomon would receive
 6. **Deuteronomy 30:15–18** (ESV) —
 - a. 15 “See, I have set before you today life and good, death and evil.
 - b. 16 If you obey the commandments of the LORD your God that I command you today, by loving the LORD your God, by walking in his ways, and by keeping his commandments and his statutes and his rules, then you shall live and multiply, and the LORD your God will bless you in the land that you are entering to take possession of it.
 - c. 17 But if your heart turns away, and you will not hear, but are drawn away to worship other gods and serve them,
 - d. 18 I declare to you today, that you shall surely perish.
 - e. You shall not live long in the land that you are going over the Jordan to enter and possess.
 7. Every indication at this point in his life that Solomon genuinely loved the Lord
 - a. That was one of the bases of the blessings he received
- B. **Obedience**
1. **1 Kings 3:3** (ESV) —
 - a. 3 Solomon loved the LORD, walking in the statutes of David his father...
 2. Also one of the deuteronomic themes; basis for blessing
 - a. Closely associated with love
 3. **Deuteronomy 10:12–13** (ESV) —
 - a. 12 “And now, Israel, what does the LORD your God require of you, but to fear the LORD your God, to walk in all his ways, to love him, to serve the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul,
 - b. 13 and to keep the commandments and statutes of the LORD, which I am commanding you today for your good?
 4. Solomon appears to be doing just that – walking in the statutes of David, the commandments of God in Deuteronomy
 - a. There is an exception
 - b. **1 Kings 3:3** (ESV) —
 - (1) 3 Solomon loved the LORD, walking in the statutes of David his father, **only he sacrificed and made offerings at the high places.**
 - c. Careful about judging Solomon too harshly in this regard
 5. At this time (prior to the temple construction) – no central place of worship
 - a. After the ark had been retrieved from Philistines, it stayed in Kiriath Jearim
 - b. Then to house of Obed-edom
 - c. Then to Jerusalem under David

- d. David wanted to build a house for it
 - (1) God forbade him
 - (2) Solomon, his son, would build it
- e. David put it in the city of David under a tent
- 6. However, the actual tent-of-meeting, the tabernacle, was at Gibeon
 - a. This was the structure meant to house the ark through the period of Numbers (wilderness) and following
- 7. David was content to let the ark remain separate from the tabernacle for a time
 - a. Son would build a permanent structure
 - b. Ark would be placed in the temple
 - c. Worship would be centralized
 - d. All that would be in the future – current situation was seen to be temporary
- 8. Because that was the case – worship took place on altars that were constructed in a number of places
 - a. All of which would have been no problem
 - b. Except that the high places were locations for Canaanite worship
 - c. Susceptible to syncretism and idolatry
 - d. That syncretism and idolatry would plunge Israel into serious apostasy
 - e. Solomon was not immune from its influence
- 9. But in the meantime, decentralized worship of Yahweh was not forbidden
 - a. As long as it remained unconnected with Canaanite worship
- 10. But because it would later be a problem for Solomon, it's mentioned in this place
- 11. If you want to hear God speak redemptively, love and obedience are prerequisites
 - a. Solomon appeared to be fulfilling those prerequisites

C. **Worship**

- 1. **1 Kings 3:4** (ESV) —
 - a. 4 And the king went to Gibeon to sacrifice there, for that was the great high place.
 - b. Solomon used to offer a thousand burnt offerings on that altar.
- 2. No problem with the place
 - a. While the ark wasn't there, this wasn't just any high place – location of the tabernacle
 - b. Legitimate worship took place there
 - c. Solomon went there to worship
- 3. Genuine worship is necessary
 - a. Don't know whether Solomon expected to hear God speak to him
 - (1) No indication of that
 - b. Certainly worship is a natural context for such a supernatural encounter

4. We know Solomon's love was genuine, his obedience largely in conformity with Deuteronomic commands
 - a. Every likelihood that his worship was genuine
 5. But it is likely that Solomon regularly attended worship
 - a. Week in and week out
 - b. Duty and discipline
 6. We tend to diminish the value of duty and discipline
 - a. Live in a psychological age
 - b. Want to be touchy-feely about our religion
 - c. Don't think we've worshiped unless we feel something
 7. Point – we need to attend worship whether we feel like it or not
 - a. Or whether feelings are the direct outcome of worship
 - b. Likely that Solomon did exactly that
 - c. Time to go up to Gibeon to worship God again
 - (1) May not have felt like doing it
 - (2) Did it anyway – duty, obligation
 8. Who knows whether God might speak just doing our duty, engaged in spiritual discipline
 - a. No indication from the text that Solomon expected this encounter
 - b. I'm inclined to think that's what happened
- D. Prerequisites
1. Love
 2. Obedience
 3. Worship
 - a. Spiritual discipline of recognizing and celebrating the worth of God

III. How to Respond to God

- A. Most of us would probably be speechless
 1. Shocked into silence
 2. Isaiah – “Woe is me. I'm a man of unclean lips and live among a people of unclean lips. I am undone.”
 3. Peter (when he has an encounter with the glory of Christ through a fishing miracle) – “Get away from me for I am a sinful man.”
- B. But Solomon appears to have been prepared for this encounter
 1. How?
 2. By the prerequisites
 - a. Love
 - b. Obedience
 - c. Worship
- C. If God came to you and said, “Ask whatever you wish”, what should be your response?
- D. Recognition of Past Provision
 1. Recognition of God's past provision
 - a. 1 Kings 3:6 (ESV) —

- (1) 6 And Solomon said, “You have shown great and steadfast love to your servant David my father, because he walked before you in faithfulness, in righteousness, and in uprightness of heart toward you....
 - b. Solomon knows something about the legacy of David and his relationship with God
 - c. David didn’t keep this hidden from his son; he taught these things to him
 - d. **Deuteronomy 6:7** (ESV) —
 - (1) 7 You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise.
 - e. David did exactly that
 - (1) But also gave God glory and thanksgiving for all of the blessings and provisions that God gave to him
 - f. We all need to recognize the history that God has had with His people
 - (1) Not just in OT times, but throughout church history
 - (2) Unfortunately, we don’t much study church history
 - (3) One of the sins of the contemporary church
 - (4) As if God’s provisions and blessings skipped 2,000 years
- E. **Foundation of God’s Promises**
- 1. **1 Kings 3:6** (ESV) —
 - a. 6 And Solomon said, “You have shown great and steadfast love to your servant David my father, because he walked before you in faithfulness, in righteousness, and in uprightness of heart toward you.
 - b. **And you have kept for him this great and steadfast love and have given him a son to sit on his throne this day.**
 - 2. Solomon realizes this encounter didn’t come out of the blue
 - a. Rooted in the promise God made to David
 - b. God hasn’t promised us the same kind of thing exactly
 - 3. But the promises He’s given to us are arguably even greater
 - a. **1 Peter 2:9–10** (ESV) —
 - (1) 9 But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.
 - (2) 10 Once you were not a people, but now you are God’s people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.
 - b. **Revelation 3:21** (ESV) —

- (1) 21 The one who conquers, I will grant him to sit with me on my throne, as I also conquered and sat down with my Father on his throne.
 - c. **2 Peter 1:3-4** (ESV) —
 - (1) 3 His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us to his own glory and excellence,
 - (2) 4 by which he has granted to us his precious and very great promises, so that through them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world because of sinful desire.
- F. **Posture of Humility**
- 1. **1 Kings 3:7** (ESV) —
 - a. 7 And now, O LORD my God, you have made your servant king in place of David my father, although I am but a little child. I do not know how to go out or come in.
 - 2. Solomon, with all of his power, is overwhelmed by the task at hand
 - a. Realizes he's not up to the job
 - (1) Infant asked to do a man's job
 - b. We ought to have the same response of humility when God speaks
 - 3. Sounds like Jeremiah
 - a. **Jeremiah 1:6** (ESV) —
 - (1) 6 Then I said, "Ah, Lord GOD! Behold, I do not know how to speak, for I am only a youth."
 - 4. But humility is just what God desires
 - a. The humble are the only kind of people God uses redemptively
 - 5. **1 Peter 5:5** (ESV) —
 - a. 5 ... Clothe yourselves, all of you, with humility toward one another, for "God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble."
- G. **Recognition of the Largeness of the Task**
- 1. **1 Kings 3:8** (ESV) —
 - a. 8 And your servant is in the midst of your people whom you have chosen, a great people, too many to be numbered or counted for multitude.
 - 2. I'm supposed to be king over these people
 - a. This is not a little medieval city-state
 - b. This is an enormous nation
 - c. Nation that exists because of the promise of God to Abraham
 - (1) Not just big – but God's nation
 - d. God has entrusted the care of His nation to Solomon
 - (1) Not that Solomon can dispose of these people any way he wants – they are God's nation!
 - (2) Solomon is God's steward
 - (3) That makes the task even more significant

3. See the connection with the Abrahamic covenant in this verse
 - a. **Genesis 15:5** (ESV) —
 - (1) 5 And he brought him outside and said, “Look toward heaven, and number the stars, if you are able to number them.” Then he said to him, “So shall your offspring be.”
 - b. Not only is this nation a multitude
 - (1) Not only are they God’s nation
 - (2) They started from nothing – one man and one woman
 - c. Pressure is on
 - (1) Solomon needs to act redemptively on behalf of this miraculous people

H. **Request for Capacity**

1. God asks him for whatever he wishes
 - a. What does he ask for?
2. **1 Kings 3:9** (ESV) —
 - a. 9 Give your servant therefore an understanding mind to govern your people, that I may discern between good and evil, for who is able to govern this your great people?”
3. Much has been made of this request for wisdom
 - a. Much of it is made in this section – Solomon’s wisdom is remarkable, legendary
 - b. But what is this wisdom for?
 - (1) To fulfill his task; the task God has given him as king
4. Remember, he’s overwhelmed with the task
 - a. He’s so small
 - b. The task is so great
 - c. The significance of this people is enormous – they are God’s nation
 - d. With all that in mind, he asks for the capacity to fulfill what God called him to do
5. What has God called you to do?
 - a. Maybe it’s a ministry
 - b. Maybe it’s fulfilling some other calling
 - c. Maybe it’s just faithfully walking through a very challenging time of life, with the joy of the Lord as your strength
 - d. If God were to come to you, what should you ask?
 - (1) Ask for whatever it will take for you to fulfill God’s purposes for your life
 - e. That would be a God-centered prayer

IV. **What to Expect from God**

A. **God’s Pleasure**

1. **1 Kings 3:10** (ESV) —
 - a. 10 It pleased the Lord that Solomon had asked this.
2. Our chief desire ought to be for God’s pleasure
3. **Philippians 2:12–13** (ESV) —

- a. 12 Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, so now, not only as in my presence but much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling,
 - b. 13 for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work **for his good pleasure**.
4. **Colossians 1:9–12** (ESV) —
- a. 9 And so, from the day we heard, we have not ceased to pray for you, asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of his will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding,
 - b. 10 so as to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, **fully pleasing to him**: bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God;
 - c. 11 being strengthened with all power, according to his glorious might, for all endurance and patience with joy;
 - d. 12 **giving thanks to the Father**, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in light.
5. **1 Thessalonians 4:1** (ESV) —
- a. 1 Finally, then, brothers, we ask and urge you in the Lord Jesus, that as you received from us how you ought **to walk and to please God**, just as you are doing, that you do so more and more.
6. Do you want to hear “Well done, My good and faithful servant”?
- a. That ought to be the cry of every Christian’s heart
7. Eric Liddel and encounter with sister
- a. God made me for China. But God also made me fast. And when I run I feel His pleasure.
- B. **Answer Congruent with God’s Will**
1. **1 Kings 3:11–12** (ESV) —
- a. 11 And God said to him, “Because you have asked this, and have not asked for yourself long life or riches or the life of your enemies, but have asked for yourself understanding to discern what is right,
 - b. 12 behold, I now do according to your word. Behold, I give you a wise and discerning mind, so that none like you has been before you and none like you shall arise after you.
2. God will answer a prayer like that
- a. It’s congruent with His will
3. **1 John 5:14–15** (ESV) —
- a. 14 And this is the confidence that we have toward him, that if we ask anything according to his will he hears us.
 - b. 15 And if we know that he hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have the requests that we have asked of him.
- C. **Above and Beyond**
1. **1 Kings 3:13** (ESV) —
- a. 13 I give you also what you have not asked, both riches and honor, so that no other king shall compare with you, all your days.

2. God loves to give so much more than we ask when we ask according to His will
 3. **Matthew 6:33** (ESV) —
 - a. 33 But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.
 4. **Ephesians 3:20** (ESV) —
 - a. 20 Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us,
 5. **Romans 8:32** (ESV) —
 - a. 32 He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things?
- D. **Conditional Future**
1. **1 Kings 3:14** (ESV) —
 - a. 14 And if you will walk in my ways, keeping my statutes and my commandments, as your father David walked, then I will lengthen your days.”
 2. God’s grace to Solomon is extraordinary
 3. But Solomon’s responsibility continues
 - a. Blessings are contingent on fulfilling those responsibilities
- E. At this point
1. So far, so good
 2. Unfortunately, it would not always be so

V. **What to do Next**

- A. **Worship**
1. **1 Kings 3:15** (ESV) —
 - a. 15 And Solomon awoke, and behold, it was a dream.
 - b. Then he came to Jerusalem and stood before the ark of the covenant of the Lord, and offered up burnt offerings and peace offerings, and made a feast for all his servants.
- B. **Consecration**
1. **Burnt offerings** – consecration
 2. I’m Yours, God
- C. **Fellowship**
1. **Peace offerings**
 2. I love to walk in your presence, God
- D. **Blessing**
1. Feast for his servants
 - a. An overflow of blessings
 - b. Shared with others
 2. Whatever blessings would come his way, Solomon would share them with his servants
 - a. All his servants
 3. He would be a channel of blessing to others
- E. That’s the proper response when God speaks