

Wisdom From Uninspired Men

Introduction.

I. All of the Bible is inspired by God. (2 Tim. 3:16-17; 2 Pet. 1:20, 21).

2TI 3:16 All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness;

2TI 3:17 that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.

2PE 1:20 But know this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture is a matter of one's own interpretation,

2PE 1:21 for no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God.

A. The Bible is no ordinary book.

B. It was written by "men moved [borne along] by the Holy Spirit." Gr. "phero" [**feh roh**] - "borne along, carried along."

C. David, of old, exclaimed. (2 Sam. 23:2).

2SA 23:2 "The Spirit of the Lord spoke by me, And His word was on my tongue.

D. Jeremiah spoke God's words. (Jere. 1:9).

JER 1:9 Then the Lord stretched out His hand and touched my mouth, and the Lord said to me, "Behold, I have put My words in your mouth.

E. Jesus promised the Holy Spirit would guide the apostles in their words. (Matt. 10:19, 20).

MAT 10:19 "But when they deliver you up, do not become anxious about how or what you will speak; for it shall be given you in that hour what you are to speak.

MAT 10:20 "For it is not you who speak, but it is the Spirit of your Father who speaks in you.

F. He also made this promise to the apostles. (Jn. 14:26; 16:13).

JOH 14:26 "But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, **He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you.**

JOH 16:13 "But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, **He will guide you into all the truth;** for He will not speak on His own initiative, but whatever He hears, He will speak; and He will disclose to you what is to come.

G. Paul taught by revelation of Jesus. (Gal. 1:12).

GAL 1:12 For I neither received it from man, nor was I taught it, but I received it through a revelation of Jesus Christ.

H. The apostles could also lay their hand on others giving them miraculous power and knowledge. (1 Cor. 12:7-10; Acts 6:4-6; 8:14-20; 19:6).

1. By deduction it is safe to conclude Mark and Luke wrote by inspiration.
 2. Luke was a very close travel companion of Paul and must have laid his hands on him.
 3. Mark was very close to Peter and Paul and most likely either Paul or Peter laid hands on him.
- II. Even though all Scripture is given by inspiration of God, not every word recorded in the Scriptures comes from inspired men.
- A. There are many uninspired words recorded in the Bible that need to be totally rejected and ignored.
1. The words of Job's wife must be rejected as foolish advise. (Job 2:9).

JOB 2:9 Then his wife said to him, "Do you still hold fast your integrity? Curse God and die!"

- a. What she said is recorded accurately.
- b. It is obvious what she spoke was not inspired from God.
- c. No godly person would even consider following her wicked advice.
- d. Job had the right attitude. (Job. 1:21).

JOB 1:21 And he said, "Naked I came from my mother's womb, And naked I shall return there. The Lord gave and the Lord has taken away. Blessed be the name of the Lord."

2. The false and foolish accusations of Job's three uninspired friends must not be accepted as words of truth or words to live by.
 - a. Every word they spoke, true or false, was uninspired.
 - b. They were sinfully erroneous in their belief that all suffering is the result of sin.
 - c. Because of their false thinking, they were attacking Job without evidence. (Job 4:4-9; 8:4-6; 11:4-6).

Eliphaz

JOB 4:4 "Your words have helped the tottering to stand, And you have strengthened feeble knees.
 JOB 4:5 "But now it has come to you, and you are impatient; It touches you, and you are dismayed.
 JOB 4:6 "Is not your fear of God your confidence, And the integrity of your ways your hope?
 JOB 4:7 "Remember now, who ever perished being innocent? Or where were the upright destroyed?
 JOB 4:8 "According to what I have seen, those who plow iniquity And those who sow trouble harvest it.

Bildad

JOB 8:4 "If your sons sinned against Him, Then He delivered them into the power of their transgression.
 JOB 8:5 "If you would seek God And implore the compassion of the Almighty,
 JOB 8:6 If you are pure and upright, Surely now He would rouse Himself for you And restore your righteous estate.

Zophar

JOB 11:4 "For you have said, 'My teaching is pure, And I am innocent in your eyes.'

JOB 11:5 "But would that God might speak, And open His lips against you,
JOB 11:6 And show you the secrets of wisdom! For sound wisdom has two sides. Know then that God forgets a part of your iniquity.

d. Jesus clearly refuted this false belief. (Jn. 9:1-3).

JOH 9:1 And as He passed by, He saw a man blind from birth.

JOH 9:2 And His disciples asked Him, saying, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he should be born blind?"

JOH 9:3 Jesus answered, "It was neither that this man sinned, nor his parents; but it was in order that the works of God might be displayed in him.

1) There are many reasons for human suffering.

2) Sin is one of the reasons, but certainly not the only reason.

3. The explanation of the Pharisees and scribes of the miracles of Jesus must be rejected as false and illogical. (Matt. 12:22-24). See Matt. 9:33,34.

MAT 12:22 Then there was brought to Him a demon-possessed man who was blind and dumb, and He healed him, so that the dumb man spoke and saw.

MAT 12:23 And all the multitudes were amazed, and began to say, "This man cannot be the Son of David, can he?"

MAT 12:24 But when the Pharisees heard it, they said, "This man casts out demons only by Beelzebul the ruler of the demons."

a. Jesus quickly rejected the preposterous explanation of these wicked men.

b. He replied with these words they could not answer. (Matt. 12:25-29).

Argument 1

MAT 12:25 And knowing their thoughts He said to them, "Any kingdom divided against itself is laid waste; and any city or house divided against itself shall not stand.

- It was ridiculous to contend Jesus was in league with Satan, but was casting out his demons.

Argument 2

MAT 12:26 "And if Satan casts out Satan, he is divided against himself; how then shall his kingdom stand?"

- Satan is too intelligent to destroy his own kingdom.
- Christians are not always that smart in regard to God's kingdom.

Argument 3

MAT 12:27 "And if I by Beelzebul cast out demons, by whom do your sons cast them out? Consequently they shall be your judges.

- Their disciples often claimed to cast out demons.
- If one casting out demons was in league with Satan, it strongly implies their disciples were also in league with

the devil.

Argument 4

MAT 12:28 "But if [since] I cast out demons by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God has come upon you.

- The word “if” is used with the meaning of “since.” See Matt. 4:3, 6.
- Jesus performed miracles “by the Spirit of God.” (Lk. 4:15-19; Jn. 3:34).

LUK 4:15 And He began teaching in their synagogues and was praised by all.

LUK 4:16 And He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up; and as was His custom, He entered the synagogue on the Sabbath, and stood up to read.

LUK 4:17 And the book of the prophet Isaiah was handed to Him. And He opened the book, and found the place where it was written,

LUK 4:18 "The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, Because He anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor. He has sent Me to proclaim release to the captives, **And recovery of sight to the blind**, To set free those who are downtrodden,

LUK 4:19 To proclaim the favorable year of the Lord. " See Isa. 61:1.

JOH 3:34 "For He whom God has sent speaks the words of God; for He gives the Spirit without measure.

- The words “the kingdom of God has come upon you” means the kingdom was “near.” (Matt. 3:2; 4:17; 10:7; Mk. 9:1).

Argument 5

MAT 12:29 "Or how can anyone enter the strong man's house and carry off his property, unless he first binds the strong man? And then he will plunder his house.

- “The strong man” is the devil.
- Jesus would not be able to take his property, that is cast out his demons, unless he first bound the strong man.
- This would be inconsistent with Jesus being in league with Satan.

Words Of The High Priest

- c. The words of the high priest sounded like wisdom, but led to the greatest sin ever committed and were very false. (Jn. 11:50).

JOH 11:50 nor do you take into account that it is expedient for you that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation should not perish. "

- 1) His words were not wisdom [killing the Son of God], but they were motivated by his bitter hatred of Jesus who was so popular with the multitudes and had renounced his wickedness.
- 2) It is sad that he, by these foolish words, was behind God’s beloved Son being crucified by the hands of lawless men. (Acts 2:23).
- 3) It is sad that he led the Sanhedrin in the condemnation of the Holy Son of God. (Jn. 6:69).
- 4) He pretended to be interested in the welfare of his nation, but was really wanting to destroy Jesus.

5) This was motivated by envy. (Matt. 27:18).

6) He had no idea that Jesus would really be raised from the dead, and men would faithfully follow Jesus throughout the ages.

7) He had in mind the killing of Jesus - not the salvation of believers.

Uninspired Words Of Inspired Men

d. Sometimes even inspired men gave uninspired words of wisdom that were smart to obey, but was not binding. (1 Cor. 7:5,6, 26-28, 39,40)

“Stop depriving One Another”

1CO 7:5 Stop depriving one another, except by agreement for a time that you may devote yourselves to prayer, and come together again lest Satan tempt you because of your lack of self-control.

1CO 7:6 But this I say by way of concession, not of command.

- Depriving one another without mutual consent could lead to lack of self-control and fornication.
- The Christian who was concerned about the welfare of his mate would heed the non-binding wisdom and advice of Paul.
- Paul gave these words “by way of concession, not of command.”
- Some believe these words “of concession” belong to what follows. (1 Cor. 7:7-9).
- The context favors it referring back to “stop depriving one another.”

At That Time It Was Better To Remain Single

1CO 7:26 I think then that this is good in view of the present distress, that it is good for a man to remain as he is.

1CO 7:27 Are you bound to a wife? Do not seek to be released. Are you released from a wife? Do not seek a wife.

1CO 7:28 But if you should marry, you have not sinned; and if a virgin should marry, she has not sinned. Yet such will have trouble in this life, and I am trying to spare you.

- Under “the present distress” one would have fewer problems if he chose not to marry.
- NIV has “present crisis”. “enistemi” [eh nis tay mee] meaning “present, impending, imminent.”
- In times of persecution, present or impending, the man who had a wife and children would have more distress than the unmarried man.
- The language here was not the advise Paul would give in all circumstances. See notes (1 Cor. 7:39, 40).

Widows Marrying At That Time

1CO 7:39 A wife is bound as long as her husband lives; but if her husband is dead, she is free to be married to whom she wishes, only in the Lord.

1CO 7:40 But in my opinion she [the Christian widow] is happier if she remains as she is; and I think [know, fully persuaded] that I also have the Spirit of God.

- This advice was given because of “the present distress.” (1 Cor. 7:26).
- Under different circumstances Paul encouraged “the younger widows” to marry. (1 Tim. 5:14,15).

1TI 5:14 Therefore, I want younger widows to get married, bear children, keep house, and give the enemy no occasion for reproach;

1TI 5:15 for some have already turned aside to follow Satan.

Words Of Uninspired Men

B. Since all Scripture is given by inspiration of God, we can rest assured that whatever was stated by uninspired men we have exactly what they said.

1. The same cannot be said of most history books.
2. The words of men and women in history books and records are most often changed or distorted or even made up.
 - a. One has to be very cautious in accepting, as gospel, what is reported in history books.
 - b. It is wise not to depend on any one source, but one should engage in research of multitude sources to learn the truth.

C. By experience and common sense, uninspired men have often expressed some great words of wisdom.

1. In this lesson some of these words of wisdom will be examined.
2. We can greatly profit from them especially when what they said is viewed in light of God’s revelation by inspired men.

I. Nebuchadnezzar

A. Nebuchadnezzar was a very proud and haughty king of Babylon, but God humbled him.

1. He learned humility from personal experience. (Dan. 4:28-33).

DAN 4:28 "All this happened to Nebuchadnezzar the king.

DAN 4:29 "Twelve months later he was walking on the roof of the royal palace of Babylon.

DAN 4:30 "The king reflected and said, 'Is this not Babylon the great, which I myself have built as a royal residence by the might of my power and for the glory of my majesty?'

DAN 4:31 "While the word was in the king's mouth, a voice came from heaven, saying, 'King Nebuchadnezzar, to you it is declared: sovereignty has been removed from you,

DAN 4:32 and you will be driven away from mankind, and your dwelling place will be with the beasts of the field. You will be given grass to eat like cattle, and seven periods of time will pass over you, until you recognize that the Most High is ruler over the realm of mankind, and bestows it on whomever He wishes.'

DAN 4:33 "Immediately the word concerning Nebuchadnezzar was fulfilled; and he was driven away from mankind and began eating grass like cattle, and his body was drenched with the dew of heaven, until his hair had grown like eagles' feathers and his nails like birds' claws.

2. This horrible experience gave him special insight about the consequences of living a proud and boastful life.
3. He made this wise statement. (Dan. 4:35-37).

DAN 4:35 "And all the inhabitants of the earth are accounted as nothing, But He does according to His will in the host of heaven And among the inhabitants of earth; And no one can ward off His hand Or say to Him, 'What hast Thou done?'"

DAN 4:36 "At that time my reason returned to me. And my majesty and splendor were restored to me for the glory of my kingdom, and my counselors and my nobles began seeking me out; so I was reestablished in my sovereignty, and surpassing greatness was added to me.

DAN 4:37 "Now I Nebuchadnezzar praise, exalt, and honor the King of heaven, for all His works are true and His ways just, and He is able to humble those who walk in pride."

4. Look at some things this uninspired man exclaimed.

a. He recognized that the God of heaven works according to His own will. God is Supreme and is answerable to know one. No one can intimidate Him or overcome Him.

b. He acknowledged that no one can question God.

1) His understanding "is infinite" as the Omniscient One. (Psa. 147:5; Heb. 4:13).

2) He knows and understands all things past, present or future.

c. He confessed that God is a God to be praised, exalted, and honored. (Dan. 4:37).

d. He knew, by personal experience, God "is able to humble those who walk in pride."

B. Others, by inspiration, stated the same truth as Nebuchadnezzar.

1. Jesus, James, Peter, and many others taught this divine principle.

a. Jesus said. (Matt. 5:3; Lk. 14:11).

MAT 5:3 "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

LUK 14:11 "For everyone who exalts himself shall be humbled, and he who humbles himself shall be exalted."

b. James, the Lord's brother, wrote these words about humility. (Jas. 4:6,7).

JAM 4:6 But He gives a greater grace. Therefore it says, "God is opposed to the proud, but gives grace to the humble."

JAM 4:7 Submit therefore to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you.

c. The apostle Peter also taught the importance of humility. (1 Pet. 5:5-6).

1PE 5:5 You younger men, likewise, be subject to your elders; and all of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, for God is opposed to the proud, but gives grace to the humble.

1PE 5:6 Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you at the proper time,

2. We must walk in humility and be willing to follow God rather than our own rules and wishes.

a. We must be willing to acknowledge faith in the One who humbly died on the cross.

b. We must be willing to confess sin and not seek to hide it. (Psa. 32:1).

PSA 32:1 How blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, Whose sin is covered!

c. We must be willing to serve others rather than be served. (Matt. 23:11).

MAT 23:11 "But the greatest among you shall be your servant.

d. We must be willing to rely on God to guide us - not our own ways and thoughts. (Isa. 55:8,9).

ISA 55:8 "For My thoughts are not your thoughts, Neither are your ways My ways," declares the Lord.

ISA 55:9 "For as the heavens are higher than the earth, So are My ways higher than your ways, And My thoughts than your thoughts.

II. Shadrach, Meshach, And Abed-nego

A. The book of Daniel also records the inspirational faith and words of three uninspired men - Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego..

1. These were great men of unwavering faith.

2. There is no evidence that the Holy Spirit guided their words, that is, dictated the words they spoke.

3. Their words came from their deep faith in God.

B. The king made a golden image and ordered all to bow down to it. (Dan. 3:1-15).

C. All did bow down to it except Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego.

1. "All" is likely a hyperbole.

2. We can be confident Daniel was included in that universal worship of the golden image.

3. This faithful and extraordinary servant is always presented in a favorable light. See Daniel 6:5.

D. Listen to these courageous words of wisdom these men spoke to the king. (Dan. 3:16-19).

DAN 3:16 Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego answered and said to the king, "O Nebuchadnezzar, we do not need to give you an answer concerning this matter.

DAN 3:17 "If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the furnace of blazing fire; and He will deliver us out of your hand, O king.

DAN 3:18 "But even if He does not, let it be known to you, O king, that we are not going to serve your gods or worship the golden image that you have set up."

DAN 3:19 Then Nebuchadnezzar was filled with wrath, and his facial expression was altered toward Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego. He answered by giving orders to heat the furnace seven times more than it was usually heated.

1. God kept these men from being destroyed by the fiery furnace.

2. Their words should inspire us to always trust in the Almighty God of heaven. (Dan. 3:20-28).

DAN 3:20 And he commanded certain valiant warriors who were in his army to tie up Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego, in order to cast them into the furnace of blazing fire.

DAN 3:21 Then these men were tied up in their trousers, their coats, their caps and their other clothes, and were cast into the midst of the furnace of blazing fire.

DAN 3:22 For this reason, because the king's command was urgent and the furnace had been made extremely hot, the

flame of the fire slew those men who carried up Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego.

DAN 3:23 But these three men, Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego, fell into the midst of the furnace of blazing fire still tied up.

DAN 3:24 Then Nebuchadnezzar the king was astounded and stood up in haste; he responded and said to his high officials, "Was it not three men we cast bound into the midst of the fire?" They answered and said to the king, "Certainly, O king."

DAN 3:25 He answered and said, "Look! I see four men loosed and walking about in the midst of the fire without harm, and the appearance of the fourth is like a son of the gods!"

DAN 3:26 Then Nebuchadnezzar came near to the door of the furnace of blazing fire; he responded and said, "Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego, come out, you servants of the Most High God, and come here!" Then Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego came out of the midst of the fire.

DAN 3:27 And the satraps, the prefects, the governors and the king's high officials gathered around and saw in regard to these men that the fire had no effect on the bodies of these men nor was the hair of their head singed, nor were their trousers damaged, nor had the smell of fire even come upon them.

DAN 3:28 Nebuchadnezzar responded and said, "Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego, who has sent His angel and delivered His servants who put their trust in Him, violating the king's command, and yielded up their bodies so as not to serve or worship any god except their own God.

E. Jesus taught His followers to have this unwavering faith in Himself and His Father. (Jn. 14:1; Heb. 11:1,8).

1. He taught believers could expect persecution. (Matt. 5:10-12; Jn. 15:18-20).

JOH 15:18 "If the world hates you, you know that it has hated Me before it hated you.

JOH 15:19 "If you were of the world, the world would love its own; but because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you.

JOH 15:20 "Remember the word that I said to you, 'A slave is not greater than his master.' If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you; if they kept My word, they will keep yours also.

2. He also taught us not to fear those who would kill us. (Matt. 10:28; Lk. 21:16-18).

MAT 10:28 "And do not fear those who kill the body, but are unable to kill the soul; but rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.

LUK 21:16 "But you will be delivered up even by parents and brothers and relatives and friends, and they will put some of you to death,

LUK 21:17 and you will be hated by all on account of My name.

LUK 21:18 "Yet not a hair of your head will perish.

3. Believers are not taught they will escape physical death (Heb. 9:27), but they will escape the second death - the lake of fire. (Rev. 20, 14,15; 21:8).

REV 20:14 And death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire.

REV 20:15 And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.

REV 21:8 "But for the cowardly and unbelieving and abominable and murderers and immoral persons and sorcerers and idolaters and all liars, their part will be in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death."

4. Believers have a beautiful home of blessings prepared for them in heaven. (Jn. 14:1-3).

a. There is no evidence these three men of faith were inspired by the Holy Spirit in their reply to the king.

b. What they said was absolutely true and was motivated by their unshakeable faith in the Almighty God of heaven.

F. May we all have the unwavering faith of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego.

III. The Man Born Blind

A. Jesus healed a poor beggar who had been blind his own life. (Jn. 9:1-7).

JOH 9:1 And as He passed by, He saw a man blind from birth.

JOH 9:2 And His disciples asked Him, saying, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he should be born blind?"

JOH 9:3 Jesus answered, "It was neither that this man sinned, nor his parents; but it was in order that the works of God might be displayed in him.

JOH 9:4 "We must work the works of Him who sent Me, as long as it is day; night is coming, when no man can work.

JOH 9:5 "While I am in the world, I am the light of the world."

JOH 9:6 When He had said this, He spat on the ground, and made clay of the spittle, and applied the clay to his eyes,

JOH 9:7 and said to him, "Go, wash in the pool of Siloam" (which is translated, Sent). And so he went away and washed, and came back seeing.

B. Later this former blind man gave this sound reasoning. (Jn. 9:28-33).

JOH 9:28 And they reviled him, and said, "You are His disciple, but we are disciples of Moses.

JOH 9:29 "We know that God has spoken to Moses; but as for this man, we do not know where He is from."

JOH 9:30 The man answered and said to them, "Well, here is an amazing thing, that you do not know where He is from, and yet He opened my eyes.

JOH 9:31 "We know that God does not hear sinners; but if anyone is God-fearing, and does His will, He hears him.

JOH 9:32 "Since the beginning of time it has never been heard that anyone opened the eyes of a person born blind.

JOH 9:33 "If this man were not from God, He could do nothing."

1. The Lord's miracles proved His origin and identity.

2. This was the purpose of John's Gospel. (Jn. 20:30-31).

3. God would not work a miracle through a sinful imposter argued the blind man. (Jn. 9:31-33). See Jn. 9:16.

4. He was not a believer in Jesus, but came to be a believer because of being given the gift of sight by Jesus. (Jn. 9:35-38).

5. The religious leaders who were interrogating him could not successfully deny the sound reasoning of this uninspired and uneducated man.

6. They charged He was born "in sins" and "they put him out." (Jn. 9:34).

C. The uninspired words of this once blind man do not teach God never answers the prayers of sinners.

1. Some have taken this position.

2. God hears the prayers of sincere sinners. (Acts 9:1-6; 10:1-5), but He does not save man by prayer alone.

a. We should not teach sinners not to pray and suggest it is vain or sinful for them to pray.

b. We should teach sinners prayer is very important.

3. The sinner who does the will of God, obeys the gospel, is the one who will be saved. (Matt. 7:21; 12:46-50; Mk. 16:16).

4. Any sinner who will not hear the law of God, his prayer becomes an abomination. (Prov. 28:9; 15:8).

PRO 28:9 He who turns away his ear from listening to the law, Even his prayer is an abomination.

PRO 15:8 The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord, But the prayer of the upright is His delight.

5. Christians must “walk in the light” and confess their sins to be forgiven. (1 Jn. 1:7,9).

IV. **Jotham**

A. Gideon (Jerubbaal), the father of Jotham, had been a good judge over Israel. (Jud. 7:1; 8:22-23).

JDG 7:1 Then Jerubbaal (that is, Gideon) and all the people who were with him, rose early and camped beside the spring of Harod; and the camp of Midian was on the north side of them by the hill of Moreh in the valley.

JDG 8:22 Then the men of Israel said to Gideon, "Rule over us, both you and your son, also your son's son, for you have delivered us from the hand of Midian."

JDG 8:23 But Gideon said to them, "I will not rule over you, nor shall my son rule over you; the Lord shall rule over you."

- Jotham was the youngest of Gideon's 70 legitimate son.
- He was the only one of Gideon's sons to escape the massacre ordered by Abimelech who desired to become king. (Judg. 9:5,6).

JDG 9:5 Then he went to his father's house at Ophrah, and killed his brothers the sons of Jerubbaal, seventy men, on one stone. But Jotham the youngest son of Jerubbaal was left, for he hid himself.

JDG 9:6 And all the men of Shechem and all Beth-millo assembled together, and they went and made Abimelech king, by the oak of the pillar which was in Shechem.

- After Abimelech had been made king by the Shechemites, Jotham appeared on Mount Gerizim and protested against their action in a parable. (Judg. 9:7-12).

JDG 9:7 Now when they told Jotham, he went and stood on the top of Mount Gerizim, and lifted his voice and called out. Thus he said to them, "Listen to me, O men of Shechem, that God may listen to you.

JDG 9:8 "Once the trees went forth to anoint a king over them, and they said to the olive tree, 'Reign over us!'

JDG 9:9 "But the olive tree said to them, 'Shall I leave my fatness with which God and men are honored, and go to wave over the trees?'

JDG 9:10 "Then the trees said to the fig tree, 'You come, reign over us!'

JDG 9:11 "But the fig tree said to them, 'Shall I leave my sweetness and my good fruit, and go to wave over the trees?'

JDG 9:12 "Then the trees said to the vine, 'You come, reign over us!'

- In this parable the trees are represented as bestowing upon the bramble the kingly honor that had been refused by the cedar, the olive, and the vine .

B. Jotham spoke these words of wisdom to the Shechemites. (Judg. 9:16-21).

JDG 9:16 "Now therefore, if you have dealt in truth and integrity in making Abimelech king, and if you have dealt well with Jerubbaal and his house, and have dealt with him as he deserved--

JDG 9:17 for my father fought for you and risked his life and delivered you from the hand of Midian;

JDG 9:18 but you have risen against my father's house today and have killed his sons, seventy men, on one stone, and have made Abimelech, the son of his maidservant, king over the men of Shechem, because he is your relative--

JDG 9:19 if then you have dealt in truth and integrity with Jerubbaal and his house this day, rejoice in Abimelech, and let him also rejoice in you.

JDG 9:20 "But if not, let fire come out from Abimelech and consume the men of Shechem and Beth-millo; and let fire come out from the men of Shechem and from Beth-millo, and consume Abimelech."

JDG 9:21 Then Jotham escaped and fled, and went to Beer and remained there because of Abimelech his brother.

- C. We hear no more of him but are informed that three years later the curse that he uttered was accomplished when a woman threw "an upper millstone on Abimelech's head, crushing his skull. (Judg. 9:54-57).

JDG 9:53 But a certain woman threw an upper millstone on Abimelech's head, crushing his skull.

JDG 9:54 Then he called quickly to the young man, his armor bearer, and said to him, "Draw your sword and kill me, lest it be said of me, 'A woman slew him.'" So the young man pierced him through, and he died.

JDG 9:55 And when the men of Israel saw that Abimelech was dead, each departed to his home.

JDG 9:56 Thus God repaid the wickedness of Abimelech, which he had done to his father, in killing his seventy brothers.

JDG 9:57 Also God returned all the wickedness of the men of Shechem on their heads, and the curse of Jotham the son of Jerubbaal came upon them.

- D. Jotham was not an inspired man of God, but he had strong insights into what happens when a wicked man makes a covenant with other wicked men.

1. God fulfilled Jotham's words. Judges 9:56-57

2. One cannot escape the consequences of sin.

a. Most pay dearly for their sins in this life.

b. All who do not turn from sin and confess them will pay in the life to come. (Gal. 6:7, 8).

c. Each person will be judged by God. (Rom. 14:12).

- E. There is a spiritual example of this principle in Jeremiah 5:29-31.

JER 5:29 'Shall I not punish these people?' declares the Lord, 'On a nation such as this Shall I not avenge Myself?'

JER 5:30 "An appalling and horrible thing Has happened in the land:

JER 5:31 The prophets prophesy falsely, And the priests rule on their own authority; And My people love it so! But what will you do at the end of it?

- F. Jesus revealed the same divine principle regarding evil men. (Matt. 26:52).

MAT 26:52 Then Jesus said to him, "Put your sword back into its place; for all those who take up the sword shall perish by the sword.

V. The Servants of Naaman

- A. Elisha, the prophet, gave Naaman these instructions to be healed of his leprosy. (2 Kgs. 5:10).

2KI 5:10 And Elisha sent a messenger to him, saying, "Go and wash in the Jordan seven times, and your flesh shall be restored to you and you shall be clean."

- B. "Naaman was furious" because of what he was told to do to be cleansed of his leprosy. (2 Kgs. 5:11-14).

2KI 5:11 But Naaman was furious and went away and said, "Behold, I thought, 'He will surely come out to me, and stand and call on the name of the Lord his God, and wave his hand over the place, and cure the leper.'

2KI 5:12 "Are not Abanah and Pharpar, the rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? Could I not wash in them and be clean?" So he turned and went away in a rage.

C. The servants reasoned with Naaman, "Since you would have gladly done an extremely difficult task, why not do this easy thing?"

2KI 5:13 Then his servants came near and spoke to him and said, "My father, had the prophet told you to do some great thing, would you not have done it? How much more then, when he says to you, 'Wash, and be clean'?"

2KI 5:14 So he went down and dipped himself seven times in the Jordan, according to the word of the man of God; and his flesh was restored like the flesh of a little child, and he was clean.

1. Some resist baptism because it is too easy and does not make sense that submitting to the Lord in baptism could result in the forgiveness of sins.
2. Some resist trusting in the crucified Jesus because it does not make sense that one could be saved by the shed blood of One who died the death of a criminal. (1 Cor. 1:21-25).

1CO 1:21 For since in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom did not come to know God, God was well-pleased through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe.

1CO 1:22 For indeed Jews ask for signs, and Greeks search for wisdom;

1CO 1:23 but we preach Christ crucified, to Jews a stumbling block, and to Gentiles foolishness,

1CO 1:24 but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.

1CO 1:25 Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men.

D. Others go to the opposite extreme because they believe the commandments of the Lord are too hard.

1. The Lord's commandments for us are not grievous. (1 Jn. 5:3).
 - a. The Greek has "barus" [bah roos] meaning "heavy, burdensome, severe."
 - b. The commandments of God are not "burdensome" unless one leaves God out of his life and depends on his own strength.
 - c. The commandments of God are good for us. (Jere. 29:11). See Psa. 84:11.

JER 29:11 'For I know the plans that I have for you,' declares the Lord, 'plans for welfare and not for calamity to give you a future and a hope.

PSA 84:11 For the Lord God is a sun and shield; The Lord gives grace and glory; No good thing does He withhold from those who walk uprightly.

- d. God is always ready to help us if we call upon Him for help. (Psa. 46:1; Jas. 4:7,8)
2. Whether we consider the task easy or difficult, we should always humbly obey God.
3. Whether we consider the task wise or foolish, we should always humbly obey God.
4. Those who hear the sayings of Jesus and do them are the ones who are like the wise man who built his house on the rock. (Matt. 7:24-25).

5. One must not build their house on the sand. (Matt. 7:26,27).

VI. Gamaliel's Words of Wisdom - Acts 5:33-40

A. The apostles were arrested and brought before the Sanhedrin to be questioned by the high priest. (Acts 5:27,28).

B. Peter and the other apostles replied. (Acts 5:29-32).

ACT 5:29 But Peter and the apostles answered and said, "We must obey God rather than men.

ACT 5:30 "The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom you had put to death by hanging Him on a cross.

ACT 5:31 "He is the one whom God exalted to His right hand as a Prince and a Savior, to grant repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins.

ACT 5:32 "And we are witnesses of these things; and so is the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who obey Him."

C. Gamaliel, a famous teacher of the law of Moses, uttered these words.

ACT 5:33 But when they heard this, they were cut to the quick and were intending to slay them.

ACT 5:34 But a certain Pharisee named Gamaliel, a teacher of the Law, respected by all the people, stood up in the Council and gave orders to put the men outside for a short time.

ACT 5:35 And he said to them, "Men of Israel, take care what you propose to do with these men.

ACT 5:36 "For some time ago Theudas rose up, claiming to be somebody; and a group of about four hundred men joined up with him. And he was slain; and all who followed him were dispersed and came to nothing.

ACT 5:37 "After this man Judas of Galilee rose up in the days of the census, and drew away some people after him, he too perished, and all those who followed him were scattered.

ACT 5:38 "And so in the present case, I say to you, stay away from these men and let them alone, for if this plan or action should be of men, it will be overthrown;

ACT 5:39 but if it is of God, you will not be able to overthrow them; or else you may even be found fighting against God. "

ACT 5:40 And they took his advice; and after calling the apostles in, they flogged them and ordered them to speak no more in the name of Jesus, and then released them.

1. This was simply an uninspired man giving his advice.
2. In this instance, it was good advice.
3. They should have taken it and done nothing at all against the apostles.
4. The more they persecuted Christians the faster Christianity grew.

D. Many have learned by experience that sometimes, when there is a problem or a controversy within the church or between individuals, the wisest thing is to do nothing at all.

1. Involvement and confrontation often makes the situation worse especially if dealing with people who refuse to listen to reason.
2. There are times for involvement and opposition and there are times to do nothing.
3. One can easily get into a situation in which he is severely judged for his actions, no matter what he does.
4. The old expression, "You are condemned if you do, and condemned if you don't" has a lot of truth to it.

Conclusion.

I. Wisdom is something to be sought after by all. (Prov. 4:5-7).

PRO 4:5 Acquire wisdom! Acquire understanding! Do not forget, nor turn away from the words of my mouth.

PRO 4:6 "Do not forsake her, and she will guard you; Love her, and she will watch over you.

PRO 4:7 "The beginning of wisdom is: Acquire wisdom; And with all your acquiring, get understanding.

A. We gain wisdom by studying God's word.

B. We gain wisdom by asking God for it. (Jas. 1:5,6).

JAM 1:5 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.

JAM 1:6 But let him ask in faith without any doubting, for the one who doubts is like the surf of the sea driven and tossed by the wind.

II. The Bible is a wonderful book. It is God's book.

A. We can learn even from various uninspired men whose words are recorded in it.

B. At times, those uninspired men showed great wisdom.

C. We can learn even more so from the inspired men of the Bible. (1 Tim. 3:15; Psa. 19:7, 11,12; Jn 5:39; 1 Jn. 5:11-13).

1TI 3:15 but in case I am delayed, I write so that you may know how one ought to conduct himself in the household of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and support of the truth.

PSA 19:7 The law of the Lord is perfect, restoring the soul; The testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple.

PSA 119:11 Thy word I have treasured in my heart, That I may not sin against Thee.

PSA 119:12 Blessed art Thou, O Lord; Teach me Thy statutes.

JOH 5:39 "You search the Scriptures, because you think [fully persuaded] that in them you have eternal life; and it is these that bear witness of Me;

1JO 5:11 And the witness is this, that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son.

1JO 5:12 He who has the Son has the life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have the life.

1JO 5:13 These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, in order that you may know that you have eternal life.

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