



Shepherd's Path

A Shepherd's Personal Devotions

Discovery Digs Series, Lesson 1

Lesson Title: Solomon Asks for a Listening Heart

Take Home Point: Give me a heart that listens to you, oh, God.

Warm-Up:

Some time ago I read a book describing how the former Soviet Union trained future espionage agents to prepare for their activities in America. One chapter is a written lecture to promising spies about American culture and how to fit in to take maximum advantage of normal everyday circumstances and surroundings. One paragraph reads: "Wall Street does everything possible to keep Americans from devoting their free time to meditation and deliberation. Movies, cheap concerts, boxing, parks, horse races, baseball, football, restaurants – all these are used to divert the masses from the realities around them." (*The Penkovskiy Papers*, Doubleday, 1965) Although we may be amused at a few inaccuracies and changes due to time, isn't it an interesting and generally accurate perspective? How sad that our busyness was a key topic in preparing others to blend in to our culture.

Read: 1 Kings 3:4-28

Observation (What happened?):

Why did Solomon ask for a listening heart to distinguish between right and wrong?

How did the Lord respond to Solomon's request?

Interpretation (What does it mean?):

Why was Solomon's humble request so pleasing to the Lord?

How do you think Solomon felt when he realized it was a dream?

Insight:

Our busy world makes it hard to stop and listen – to God, to others, to our own hearts. Satan knows that our relationship with God, like human relationships, takes time and communication to grow deeper and stronger. So, one of his key tactics is to keep us busy so we don't have or take time to listen to God's voice. He knows that it gets harder to hear God speak to us as we become mired in the daily world of activity. Jesus knew this, too, which is why he mentioned it in his parable in Matthew 3:13-23. In verse 22 he says, "*The one who received the seed that fell among the thorns is the man who hears the word, but the worries of this life and the deceitfulness of wealth choke it, making it unfruitful.*" (NIV) Listening to God doesn't come automatically; it takes effort and time. Listening to the Lord was Solomon's desire because he recognized his need for God's wisdom to be a good king to the Israelites. It needs to be our desire, too, so we can live as God's light in this sinful world.

Application (What does it mean to me?):

What situations are you facing that require wisdom and discernment beyond what you have?

Pray for the children in your small group to be able to discern between right and wrong as they go through this week.

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