

Wising Up

It was Satan's first and best shot.

Remember the old Indiana Jones movie where Jones and the bad guys get to the cave in search of the Holy Grail? They had to chose wisely to get the cup which brought life. In Eden, to be like God was the temptation, specifically, to have His wisdom. You see, when Eve looked at the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, she saw "...*that the tree was good for food, that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree desirable to make one wise...*" Yet, as for nutritional value and visual beauty – these things could most assuredly have been attributed to many, many trees in the garden, so the first two observations she made were not really 'the hook'. Satan had told her that if she ate of the fruit, she would be like God, knowing good and evil. And, this is what she desired, this wisdom – this was the bait and the hook so to speak. As you know, when she ate of it, her eyes were opened, but the wisdom she received was not God's.

And this is the real problem, isn't it? Ever since, man in his ego-centric nature has always considered himself as wiser than God. That's because the source of this worldly wisdom is a dark, deceptive enemy bent on our destruction.

Now, the third thing that Jesus is proclaimed to be worthy of in

heaven (see Rev 5:12) is wisdom. If we are among those gathered around the throne proclaiming His worthiness, we will be praising Him all the more sincerely if we know why He is worthy of each of the seven things mentioned. We've looked at power and riches in two earlier essays. Herein, we'll consider wisdom – why is Jesus in particular worthy of it?

To answer that, we will look at the sources of wisdom, its characteristics and fruit and then finally its part in the overall plan of God.

The nature of wisdom is directly attributable to its source. In the garden of Eden, there wasn't yet an economic system so a lust for mammon (i.e. material goods) was not a valid temptation. Neither was nicer clothing tempting, nor finer food. Fame couldn't be used since there weren't any other people. In fact, virtually all the things we would consider as temptations to our own sinful hearts were simply non-starters for Satan – so how do you tempt true innocence?

The only thing Adam and Eve could recognize as a deficiency, if you would, in their existence was linked to their desire to be more like the One who made them. In their sinless situation, I submit that it was a perfectly natural desire and one that we as believers share. Perhaps the time they spent in direct fellowship with God left them with such inspiration and awe that they truly wanted to be like their Maker.

Now, we all know the Genesis story. Satan deceived them while fostering the notion that God did not want them to be like Him -- to have His wisdom. Of course, we have the benefit of the scriptures that tell us just the opposite.

1 John 3:2 says, "*Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we **shall be like Him**, for we shall see Him as He is.*" While, 1 John 4:17 says, "*Love has been perfected among us in this: that we may have boldness in the day of judgment; because **as He is, so are we in this world.***" And James wrote in James 1:5, "*If any of you **lacks wisdom, let him ask of God**, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him.*" So we now know that the very things which the devil said were not in God's heart have been revealed in Christ Jesus to be His sincere intentions after all.

Nevertheless, Satan offered wisdom and in doing so he enticed Eve with the 'method', but he didn't specify the source – himself. Yes, our enemy has his own brand of wisdom – one that insanely perceives the wisdom of God as foolishness. Keep in mind that mankind did not originally have a desire to rebel against God but rather a desire to be more like God. The devil used that to snare and enslave us in the same way demented cult leaders use it to create their own followings.

In speaking to the Prince of Tyre (the son of the King of Tyre who is the picture of Satan), the Bible says,

*"Because your **heart is lifted up**,*

And you say, 'I am a god, I sit in the seat of gods, In the midst of the seas,' Yet you are a man, and not a god,

*Though you set your heart as **the heart of a god***

(Behold, you are wiser than Daniel!

There is no secret that can be hidden from you!

*With **your wisdom and your understanding***

You have gained riches for yourself,

And gathered gold and silver into your treasuries:

*By **your great wisdom** in trade you have increased your riches.*

*And your **heart is lifted up because of your riches,**"*
(Eze 28:2-5)

And to the King of Tyre (Satan) it says,

"You were in Eden, the garden of God; ...

*Your **heart was lifted up because of your beauty;***

*You corrupted **your wisdom for the sake of your splendor;**"*
(Eze 28:13,17)

Thus, Satan's wisdom, though corrupted, became man's. Thus, it is the wisdom of this corrupted world. Here's what the scriptures have to say about it:

“Where is the wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the disputer of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? For since, in the wisdom of God, the world through [Satan’s] wisdom did not know God, it pleased God through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe.” 1 Cor 1:20,21

“However, we speak wisdom among those who are mature, yet not the wisdom of this age, nor of the rulers of this age, who are coming to nothing. But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, the hidden wisdom which God ordained before the ages for our glory,” 1 Cor 2:6,7

“Let no one deceive himself. If anyone among you seems to be wise in this age, let him become a fool that he may become wise. For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God.” 1 Cor 3:18, 19

As for Satan’s wisdom, it says, *“This wisdom does not descend from above, but is earthly, sensual, demonic.”* And it adds, *“But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy.”* Jam 3:15, 17

Yes, God’s wisdom is entirely different from the devil’s. And, He has spoken of it plainly throughout the Bible. For instance:

“And God gave Solomon wisdom and exceedingly great understanding, and largeness of

heart like the sand on the seashore.” 1 Kings 4:29

“Behold, You desire truth in the inward parts,

And in the hidden part You will make me to know wisdom.”

Psa 51:6

“The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom;”

Psa 111:10

“Happy is the man who finds wisdom,

And the man who gains understanding;” Pro 3:13

“For wisdom is better than rubies,

And all the things one may desire cannot be compared with her.” Pro 8:11

Now, as we saw above, Satan and his servants, mankind, have used his wisdom to gain material prosperity and a false sense of security. This has always led to great pride which is the fundamental sin of the devil.

(See Isa 14:12-15)

Conversely, God has consistently used His wisdom to create blessings for others –

“Oh, give thanks to the LORD, for He is good!... To Him who by wisdom made the heavens,”

Psa 136:1,5

“The LORD by wisdom founded the earth;

By understanding He established the heavens;”

Pro 3:19

Basically, Satan’s wisdom is self-centered whereas God’s is others centered. And this point is

what brings us to Jesus. Isaiah the prophet wrote of Him,

“The Spirit of the LORD shall rest upon Him,

The Spirit of wisdom and understanding,

The Spirit of counsel and might,

The Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD.” Isa 11:2

Luke recorded concerning the child Jesus, *“And the Child grew and became strong in spirit, filled with wisdom; and the grace of God was upon Him.”* Luk 2:40

Never was there a life so oriented to humble submission to the Father. Never was anyone so oriented to saving and serving others. Never was such purity, peace, and gentleness lived out. Jesus had a godly wisdom that Adam and Eve could have had – wisdom that you and I as believers can now have for the asking.

The wisdom He is indeed worthy of, because He was true to it, He has passed along liberally to His followers who desire it. *“Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.”* Col 3:16

“Therefore settle it in your hearts not to meditate beforehand on what you will answer; for I will give you a mouth and wisdom which all your adversaries will not be able to contradict or resist.” Luk 21:14,15

Satan indeed suckered man into following his insidious wisdom and

I suspect that he did the same thing long ago in the spiritual realm to the principalities and powers therein. But Jesus the Lamb of God is worthy of wisdom because in obeying Father God – coming to planet earth, living a humble, others-oriented life, following God’s will all the way to the cross -- He created the church *“...the mystery, which from the beginning of the ages has been hidden in God who created all things through Jesus Christ...”* Eph 3:9

And why did He do that? Because contrary to the devil’s grand deception, his implied claim that God doesn’t want to impart His wisdom, the whole of man’s dilemma and salvation is, among other things, a grand impartation. It’s a demonstration, if you would *“...to the intent that now the manifold wisdom of God might be made known by the church to the principalities and powers in the heavenly places, according to the eternal purpose which He accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord,”* Eph 3:10,11

Yes, all the cosmos in the unseen spiritual creation is learning the many faceted and wondrous nature of God’s wisdom. Through the church, they are observing the glorious truth of it – that which was hidden from Satan and sinful man, ordained from before the ages even began! That wisdom is embodied in our dear Savior Jesus Christ forever! Col 2:3. Worthy is the Lamb!