

The Biblical Examiner

An Examination of Biblical Precepts Involved in Issues at Hand

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Wisdom

Ex 28:3

I have filled with the spirit of wisdom.. This is the first time the word *wisdom* is used in Scripture. It is important to understand the context of *wisdom* and to remember it every time spiritual *wisdom* and *power* is referred to in God's word. As we consider the source, purpose and some practical applications of the *spirit of wisdom*, we will see that it is not even remotely connected with mystical attitudes or feelings.

Without a good working knowledge of the power and work of the Holy Spirit in the OT, it is impossible to understand the NT teaching on the power and work of the Holy Spirit, for all NT doctrine must be understood in light of their OT illustrations (2 Ti 3:16). Regardless of what has been taught for the last 100 years within Christian circles (promoted chiefly by the Keswicks. See The Keswicks in this mailing), the power and wisdom of the Spirit is something that is very practical: it applies to everyday life and involves simply knowing and doing the will (law-word) of God in daily activity. Accordingly, the *spirit of wisdom* is active whether we are painting a car, working in a factory, farming, studying Scripture &c.

Keil says concerning Exodus 28:3:

In the Old Testament *wisdom* is constantly used for practical intelligence in the affairs of life; here, for example, it is equivalent to artistic skill surpassing man's natural ability, which is therefore described as being filled with the divine spirit of wisdom.

Observe:

First, the source of the *spirit of wisdom*: it is the Lord, neither Moses nor the individual, Job 38:36; Pro 2:6. The Lord later identified to Moses the ones whom He had given the necessary skills to do the work. (Please note that we are discussing both, in corrupt modern vernacular, "secular" and "sacred" work. Even though it is impossible to separate life into "sacred" & "secular" areas, we will use the terms because their meaning is well understood. However biblically, either a Christian is in full time service for the Lord and everything "sacred," or he is in sin.)

Furthermore, one of the pastor/teacher's responsibilities is to help identify who has what skill from God, train them to properly apply the word of God to their skill in every area of life, and encourage them to effectively utilize their skill in the kingdom work, Mat 6:33; Eph 4:12. (All

work is kingdom work! We must keep in mind that the *spirit of wisdom* is at work in all the redeemed at all times because the *spirit of God* was received at salvation. The *spirit of God* is not put on and taken off as one would a garment.)

Moses did not (nor was he commanded to) use "wisdom of words" to persuade the people to volunteer for the work of the kingdom (cf. 1 Co 1:17; 2:4, 13). The Lord equipped and called the individuals to do His work; Moses was simply told to speak the command word of God to the people and tell them what to do. (Ex 25:2, Moses was responsible for giving the people the opportunity to give of their talent and finances to the work of God; the people were responsible for using their God-given abilities and wealth for the Lord, and the Lord made them willing.)

Not only does God give special gifts and abilities over and above natural abilities to certain individuals with which to serve Himself ("secular" gifts, eg. carpentry, mechanical, "artistic skill," &c; "spiritual" gifts, eg. developing and teaching the word of God, service in the Kingdom, &c.), but He, according to His good pleasure, gives to all their gifts and abilities for every day life, Rom 12:4-6; 1 Cor 12:1-7; Eph 4:7; 1 Cor 4:7, &c. Therefore, everyone is responsible for using his God-given gifts as needed in His particular ("spiritual") work as well as in his daily ("secular") work, and each must honour Him with the firstfruits of his labour.

Second, the purpose of the *spirit of wisdom*: That they may make... The Lord told Moses that there were very practical purposes for giving His special *spirit of wisdom* to certain persons; it was so they could work according to God's instructions.

Thus, the *spirit of wisdom*: 1) had to be supplied by the Lord; 2) was so the individuals could do hard skilled work for the glory of the Lord (in this case, making the priest's glorious and beautiful garments and the Lord's glorious and beautiful tabernacle); 3) involved tremendous skill, including skill to engrave precious stones, including diamonds (no mean skill in itself); 4) involved great understanding of the will, work and word of God.

Notice that God's *spirit of wisdom* here had nothing to do with "education," as we think of education, or with the current idea of some mystical attitude or feeling as presented by twentieth century Christianity (see The Keswicks below). Godly, Biblical *wisdom and power of the spirit* is "practical intelligence," the ability to work hard at our occupational calling and apply the commandments of God to our

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