

Th131 God's Plan

Lesson Th131-9 A Parent's Love

In our last few lessons we learned that God is love. We also learned that love is not complete in itself, but rather love is made complete when it has someone to love. We discovered that love cannot be forced upon someone, but that love should be freely given, freely received, and freely returned. In this lesson we will explore the nature of the love between a parent and their children.

God has built within the hearts of men and women an instinctive desire to love their children. Most parents discover this upon the birth of their first child. Their hearts are so filled with love and joy. News is sent out to all of the parents' friends and family announcing the birth of the child.

When King David died, his son Solomon was made king of Israel. It is said that he was a very wise man. Now two prostitutes came to the king and stood before him. One of them said, "Pardon me, my lord. This woman and I live in the same house, and I had a baby while she was there with me. The third day after my child was born; this woman also had a baby. We were alone; there was no one in the house but the two of us. During the night this woman's son died because she lay on him. So she got up in the middle of the night and took my son from my side while I your servant was asleep. She put him by her breast and put her dead son by my breast. The next morning, I got up to nurse my son—and he was dead! But when I looked at him closely in the morning light, I saw that he wasn't the son I had borne."

The other woman shouted her response, "No! The living one is my son; the dead one is yours."

But the first one insisted, "No! The dead one is yours; the living one is mine." And so they argued before the king.

Can you imagine the stir that these two prostitutes were causing in the royal throne room? The new king sat upon his throne and was expected to render judgment for all important matters of the kingdom. But, standing before him, howling and screaming at one another were two prostitutes! All of the high officials standing at court were shocked at this display and wondered why the king would allow himself to be drawn into this squabble.

All eyes turned towards the king as he spoke, "This one says, 'My son is alive and your son is dead,' while that one says, 'No! Your son is dead and mine is alive.'" Then the king stood to his feet and commanded, "Bring me a sword." One of the royal guards quickly brought a sword for the king.

Solomon looked into the faces of the two prostitutes and then gave an order: "Cut the living child in two and give half to one and half to the other."

A stunned silence swept across the court. Their mouths hung open in shock as the guard stepped forward with sword in hand. Suddenly the woman whose son was alive was deeply moved out of love for her son and she cried out to the king, "Please, my lord, give her the living baby! Don't kill him!"

But the other said, "Neither I nor you shall have him. Cut him in two!"

Solomon raised his hand to silence the court and to stay the hand of the guard. Then he gave his ruling: "Give the living baby to the first woman. Do not kill him; for she is his mother."

Parents love their children deeply. Most parents will sacrifice their own desires for the sake of their children. And what benefit or profit does a loving parent expect to gain from their children? What is it that a parent truly seeks from their child? First and foremost, every parent desires one thing from their children. They desire that their children will love them back.

Every other desire that a parent has for their children is secondary to this, for a child who loves their parents brings joy to the family. Remember Jesus' story about the man who had two sons? The younger son rejected his father's love and demanded his inheritance. That son caused his father great sorrow.

This lesson is **important** because it teaches that most parents love their children, and desire to have their child return their love. As children, we should love and honor our parents.

The **main truth** of this lesson is that God, our Father, loves us more than any parent and in return we should give him all our love.

To **review** this lesson, answer the following questions:

1. Two prostitutes came to King Solomon and asked him for a judgment in regard to what? [Pause for 5 seconds.]
A. If you said that they had a dispute over whose child was alive and whose child was dead, you are correct.
2. How did King Solomon determine which prostitute was the mother of the living child? [Pause for 5 seconds.]
A. If you said that he was going to have the living child cut in half and each prostitute get a half, you answered correctly.
3. Why did King Solomon threaten to have the living baby cut in two? [Pause for 5 seconds.]
A. If you said, "He knew that a mother's love for her child is so great that she would rather see someone else have the child, than for the child to die," you are right.

Your **assignment** for this lesson is to replay this lesson two or three times until you can repeat the story accurately. Then, find someone who is a parent and talk to them about their love for their children. Discuss the various aspects of a parent's love and the similarities or differences between a parent's love and God's love. Tell someone the story of King Solomon and the two prostitutes.