

Major Event: Solomon

Lesson 2: Solomon Chooses Wisdom

Scriptures: 1 Kings 3:1-28

Central Text: 1 Kings 3:10-13

10 It was pleasing in the sight of the Lord that Solomon had asked this thing. 11 God said to him, "Because you have asked this thing and have not asked for yourself long life, nor have asked riches for yourself, nor have you asked for the life of your enemies, but have asked for yourself discernment to understand justice, 12 behold, I have done according to your words. Behold, I have given you a wise and discerning heart, so that there has been no one like you before you, nor shall one like you arise after you. 13 "I have also given you what you have not asked, both riches and honor, so that there will not be any among the kings like you all your days.

Suggested Subjects for Teacher to Cover:

Verse 1 – We see that Solomon was a shrewd leader and married one of Pharaoh's daughters to establish a "marriage alliance" to prevent Egypt from attacking Jerusalem before the wall and temple were completed. Note this is actually a covenant violation as described in Exodus 34:12-16

Versus 2-3 – We see that the people were sacrificing in the "high places" as well as Solomon because there was no temple built. Notice that Solomon was described as one who loved the Lord and walked after the statutes of his father, but he still sacrificed and burned incense at the high places. In other old testament books the term "high places" usually meant places where false gods and idols of other nations were worshipped. Although Solomon loved the Lord, he still seemed to worship other foreign gods in covenant violation.

Verse 5 – The Lord appears to Solomon in a dream and asks him what he desires the most. Note that this was following a time when Solomon sacrificed and burned incense in Gibeon.

Versus 6-8 – Solomon thanks the Lord for establishing him as King, according to His promise to David, and asks the Lord to provide him wisdom to lead the Lord's people. 9 *"So give Your servant an understanding heart to judge Your people to discern between good and evil. For who is able to judge this great people of Yours?"* Note that God is a faithful and true God and always remembers his promises.

Versus 10-15 – We see that the Lord was pleased with Solomon's request for wisdom or discernment to lead his people and also gave him honor and riches, *"I have also given you what you have not asked, both riches and honor, so that there will not be any among the kings like you all your days.* We also see that he promises Solomon a long life as seen in verse 14 *"If you walk in My ways, keeping My statutes and commandments, as your father David walked, then I will prolong your days."* Note that the promise of long life is part of the original covenant with Israel Deut 30:15-20.

Versus 16-28 – In these versus we see the story of the two women both claiming that the living baby was theirs and that the other mother had the dead baby. Solomon commands his servants to cut the live baby in two pieces and give each woman half of the baby. The real mother of the living baby pleaded with Solomon to give the baby to the other mother to save the baby's life. Solomon knew that the real mother would spare the baby's life out of love and the mother of the dead baby would not care. We see that the wisdom of Solomon was established and the people feared him because they saw the wisdom of God in him. *"When all Israel heard of the judgment which the king had handed down, they feared the king, for they saw that the wisdom of God was in him to administer justice".*

Suggested attributes:

1. Of God: Sovereignty, Veracity, Faithfulness
2. Of Man: Trust in God to fulfill His promises

Suggested Reading for Parents and Child at Home: Deut 30:15-20, I Chronicles 9:12-31

Notes: The word "heart" as stated in the Old Testament was a reference to what we now know as the mind. Old Testament scholars believed that we thought from the heart, so it is appropriate when reading the Bible to translate heart for mind in most circumstances.

Although the Lord was pleased with Solomon and granted him great wisdom, honor and riches we still see some covenant violations within this story namely marrying Pharaoh's daughter and worshipping in the "high places" which usually referred to the worship of idols or foreign false gods, a practice the Jews commonly fell into.