

# The Wise Request

*1 Kings 3:1-15*



# 1 Kings 2:46 - 3:2

So the king commanded Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, and he went out and fell upon him so that he died. Thus the kingdom was established in the hands of Solomon. Then Solomon formed a marriage alliance with Pharaoh king of Egypt, and took Pharaoh's daughter and brought her to the city of David until he had finished building his own house and the house of the Lord and the wall around Jerusalem. The people were still sacrificing on the high places, because there was no house built for the name of the Lord until those days.

# Kingdom Security

- Solomon eliminates the remaining threat to his throne.
- There is a political alliance formed through marriage to the Pharaoh's daughter.
- Israel was sacrificing despite a lack of a temple/tabernacle at this point.

# 1 Kings 3:3-4

Now Solomon loved the Lord, walking in the statutes of his father David, except he sacrificed and burned incense on the high places. The king went to Gibeon to sacrifice there, for that was the great high place; Solomon offered a thousand burnt offerings on that altar.

# Honoring God

- He sacrificed and burned incense on the high places.
- Solomon loved God and wanted to show it with a major sacrifice.
- God asks him what gift he would like to receive.

# High Places

- The boundaries of the sanctuary were marked out, generally by a low stone wall, and ablutions (ritual cleansing with water or other liquid) and removal of the sandals were necessary before the worshipper could enter.
- In 1 Kings the practice of using high places is treated as legitimate [for sacrificing to Jehovah] before the construction of the Temple (1 Ki 3:2-4), but after that it is condemned unequivocally.
- Priests were not necessarily assigned to a place.

# High Place in Gibeon



“Ask what you wish Me to give you.”

-God to Solomon in 1 Kings 3:5



# The Request

# 1 Kings 3:6-7

➤ Then Solomon said, "You have shown great lovingkindness to Your servant David my father, according as he walked before You in truth and righteousness and uprightness of heart toward You; and You have reserved for him this great lovingkindness, that You have given him a son to sit on his throne, as it is this day. Now, O Lord my God, You have made Your servant king in place of my father David, yet I am but a little child; I do not know how to go out or come in."

# 1 Kings 3:8-9

➤ "Your servant is in the midst of Your people which You have chosen, a great people who are too many to be numbered or counted. 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?"

# Israel & Wisdom

- While other civilizations shared in wisdom literature, the major difference is the Hebrew wisdom writings acknowledged one God, denying materialism and [the worship of many gods.]
- "The fear of the Lord" distinguished Israel from other nations because they viewed wisdom and knowledge as coming from God. Thus knowledge of God had implications for [every aspect of Israel's life.]

# Wanted: Wisdom

- Basically the very practical art of being prudent, sensible, and skillfully insightful in order to have good success in life. The ability to discern and achieve order in order to steer through life earning favor and a good name with God and man is the goal. (Hill and Walton, 320)
- Only 2 paths of life in Bible, way of the righteous or the way of the wicked. (See Psalm 1 and Matthew 7:13-14)
- The goal of wisdom was a proper relationship with YAHWEH.

# Hesed...Help Please

- Hebrew word is "Hesed" which is loosely translated "covenant faithfulness."
- Lovingkindness-tender kindness motivated by or expressing affection.
- Solomon recognizes God's faithfulness and praises Him for it.
- Solomon recognizes his own inadequacy and pleads for help.

# God's Answer

# 1 Kings 3:10-12

➤ It was pleasing in the sight of the Lord that Solomon had asked this thing. 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, 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."



# 1 Kings 3:13-14

➤ "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. If you walk in My ways, keeping My statutes and commandments, as your father David walked, then I will prolong your days."

# Granted & More

- God's blessing was related to Solomon's request.
- Wisdom and discernment were given "in Spades!"
- Long life was conditional on Solomon's future decisions.

# Solomon's Response

# 1 Kings 3:15

- Then Solomon awoke, and behold, it was a dream. And he came to Jerusalem and stood before the ark of the covenant of the Lord, and offered burnt offerings and made peace offerings, and made a feast for all his servants.

# Answered Prayers = Praise

- Solomon's request was granted. He was given even more than he asked.
- He presents himself before God in Jerusalem.
- Sacrifices and celebration followed.
- All of these acts set an example for the people of Israel to follow.

# What About Us Today?

- We should be seeking a close relationship with God.
- Our prayer requests should be based on seeking God's Will not our own selfish desires.
- Wisdom does not necessarily guarantee us a lasting relationship with God. Solomon turned from God in 1 Kings 11!
- God will grant wisdom if we will only ask not doubting (see James 1:5-8).

# James 1:5-8

➤ But if any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all generously and without reproach, and it will be given to him. But he must ask in faith without any doubting, for the one who doubts is like the surf of the sea, driven and tossed by the wind. For that man ought not to expect that he will receive anything from the Lord, being a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.