

At Gibeon, the LORD appeared to Solomon in a dream by night, and God said, "Ask what I shall give you." (1 Kings 3:5)

Almighty God, from you come all wisdom, knowledge, and understanding. We thank you for leading us in what is good and right. Give us wisdom to follow you and serve others, just as you did for your servant King Solomon. We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Introduction

Solomon became king and ruled the people after his father, David. But he was young and inexperienced. When God bid him ask for whatever he wished, Solomon asked God for the wisdom of a discerning heart, so that he might serve as a just ruler.

Read: 1 Kings 3:3-15

On reading these verses, what are some of your initial impressions and questions? What stands out to you?

The Biblical Context

The books of 1 and 2 Samuel and the books of 1 and 2 Kings tell the story of Israel as a united nation and the subsequent division into north and south kingdoms.

For the nation of Israel, the time of the Monarchy was a high point; one king ruled over a united land. The first was King Saul, a troubled leader who later turned away from God. The Lord raised up a second king, David, to take Saul's place. David had hoped to build a temple for the Lord, but God told him that this privilege would go to his son.

When David died, his young son Solomon took the throne. Solomon was the son born to David and Bathsheba. Fulfilling his father's intention, it was King Solomon who built the great temple in Jerusalem. Though Solomon became well known for his wise leadership, even he did not remain faithful to the end. After him, the kingdom split apart.

Discussion Questions

1. Where was Solomon when he offered his sacrifices to God? According to Scripture, how many burnt offerings did Solomon sacrifice on that altar? Why was this a good way for Solomon to begin his reign?
2. How, or through what means, did God appear to Solomon? What did God say to him? Is this the kind of thing that happened all the time, or was this a special case? Why?
3. From whom did Solomon inherit the throne as king? From what you see in verses 7-8, do you think Solomon felt ready to be king? Why or why not?
4. In verse 9, what exactly did Solomon ask for? Why was God pleased with Solomon's request?
5. In the end, what were the many other things that God gave to Solomon? How do you think God wanted Solomon to use these gifts?
6. Read Proverbs 1:1-7. What does Solomon say here about the importance of wisdom? Read verse 8. To whom is Solomon speaking? How does this same encouragement apply to us as well?
7. The Bible is a very old book about people who lived a long time ago. In what way(s) do the lessons we learn from Scripture still apply in our modern lives? In what sense does the Bible teach us the "timeless" Truth of God?
8. Why was it important that Solomon sought God's wisdom, rather than coming up with his own ideas? What wisdom can we gain from reading the Bible?