

SOLOMON'S REQUEST OF THE LORD

BIBLE TEXT : I Kings 3:5-15; 4:21-34

LESSON 255 Senior Course

MEMORY VERSE: "Trust in the LORD, and do good; so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed" (Psalm 37:3).

BIBLE TEXT in King James Version

1 Kings 3:5-15

⁵ In Gibeon the LORD appeared to Solomon in a dream by night: and God said, Ask what I shall give thee.

⁶ And Solomon said, Thou hast shewed unto thy servant David my father great mercy, according as he walked before thee in truth, and in righteousness, and in uprightness of heart with thee; and thou hast kept for him this great kindness, that thou hast given him a son to sit on his throne, as *it is* this day.

⁷ And now, O LORD my God, thou hast made thy servant king instead of David my father: and I *am but* a little child: I know not *how* to go out or come in.

⁸ And thy servant *is* in the midst of thy people which thou hast chosen, a great people, that cannot be numbered nor counted for multitude.

⁹ Give therefore thy servant an understanding heart to judge thy people, that I may discern between good and bad: for who is able to judge this thy so great a people?

¹⁰ And the speech pleased the Lord, that Solomon had asked this thing.

¹¹ And God said unto him, Because thou hast asked this thing, and hast not asked for thyself long life; neither hast asked riches for thyself, nor hast asked the life of thine enemies; but hast asked for thyself understanding to discern judgment;

¹² Behold, I have done according to thy words: lo, I have given thee

BIBLE REFERENCES:

I The Lord's Promise and Solomon's Prayer

1 God makes an unlimited promise to Solomon, I Kings 3:5;

2 Chronicles 1:7

⁷ In that night did God appear unto Solomon, and said unto him, Ask what I shall give thee.

2 God's promises to the believers today are unlimited,

John 15:7

⁷ If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.

Matthew 7:7-8

⁷ Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you:

⁸ For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.

Mark 11:24

²⁴ Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive *them*, and ye shall have *them*.

3 Solomon manifests humility, as do other great men of God, I Kings 3:6-8;

Jeremiah 1:6

⁶ Then said I, Ah, Lord GOD! behold, I cannot speak: for I *am* a child.

Exodus 4:10

¹⁰ And Moses said unto the LORD, O my Lord, I *am* not eloquent, neither heretofore, nor since thou hast spoken unto thy servant: but I *am* slow of speech, and of a slow tongue.

Genesis 18:27

²⁷ And Abraham answered and said, Behold now, I have taken upon me to speak unto the Lord, which *am but* dust and ashes:

Genesis 32:10

¹⁰ I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies, and of all the truth, which thou hast shewed unto thy servant; for with my staff I passed over this Jordan; and now I am become two bands.

Judges 6:15

¹⁵ And he said unto him, Oh my Lord, wherewith shall I save Israel? behold, my family *is* poor in Manasseh, and I *am* the least in my father's house.

2 Samuel 7:18

¹⁸ Then went king David in, and sat before the LORD, and he said, Who *am* I, O Lord GOD? and what *is* my house, that thou hast brought me hitherto?

4 Solomon requests wisdom to govern Israel, I Kings 3:9, 10;

Job 28:28

²⁸ And unto man he said, Behold, the fear of the Lord, that *is* wisdom; and to depart from evil *is* understanding.

James 1:5-7

⁵ If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all *men* liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.

⁶ But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed.

⁷ For let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord.

1 Corinthians 1:23-24

²³ But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a

a wise and an understanding heart; so that there was none like thee before thee, neither after thee shall any arise like unto thee.

¹³ And I have also given thee that which thou hast not asked, both riches, and honour: so that there shall not be any among the kings like unto thee all thy days.

¹⁴ And if thou wilt walk in my ways, to keep my statutes and my commandments, as thy father David did walk, then I will lengthen thy days.

¹⁵ And 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 up burnt offerings, and offered peace offerings, and made a feast to all his servants.

1 Kings 4:21-34

²¹ And Solomon reigned over all kingdoms from the river unto the land of the Philistines, and unto the border of Egypt: they brought presents, and served Solomon all the days of his life.

²² And Solomon's provision for one day was thirty measures of fine flour, and threescore measures of meal,

²³ Ten fat oxen, and twenty oxen out of the pastures, and an hundred sheep, beside harts, and roebucks, and fallowdeer, and fatted fowl.

²⁴ For he had dominion over all *the region* on this side the river, from Tiphseh even to Azzah, over all the kings on this side the river: and he had peace on all sides round about him.

²⁵ And Judah and Israel dwelt safely, every man under his vine and under his fig tree, from Dan even to Beersheba, all the days of Solomon.

²⁶ And Solomon had forty thousand

stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness;

²⁴ But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God.

Colossians 2:2-3

² That their hearts might be comforted, being knit together in love, and unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the acknowledgement of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ;

³ In whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

5 The Lord replies to Solomon, I Kings 3:11-15;

Matthew 6:33

³³ But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.

II The Prosperity and Glory of Solomon's Kingdom

1 The earthly promises to Abraham are fulfilled, I Kings 4:21, 24, 25;

Genesis 22:17

¹⁷ That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies;

Genesis 15:18

¹⁸ In the same day the LORD made a covenant with Abram, saying, Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates:

2 God bountifully provides for Solomon, I Kings 4:22, 23, 26-28;

Luke 6:38

³⁸ Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again.

3 God gave Solomon wisdom, I Kings 4:29-34;

Matthew 12:42

⁴² The queen of the south shall rise up in the judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: for she came from the uttermost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and, behold, a greater than Solomon is here.

NOTES:

A Saved Young Man

"And Solomon loved the LORD." Jesus gave as the first and greatest commandment, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind" (Matthew 22:37). This deep love within the heart comes only through the new birth. We do not know when Solomon experienced the new birth, but it is quite possible that he wrote from his own experience when he said, "Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth" (Ecclesiastes 12:1). It is evident that Solomon was saved during part of his life, for his writings are incorporated in the inspired Word of God. "The prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost" (II Peter 1:21).

Solomon was very young when he began to reign; his own words were, "I am but a little child" (I Kings 3:7). David called him "young and tender." Some think that he was about twenty years old. Whatever his age, Solomon's love for the Lord led him to call all the captains, judges, and nobles to go with him to Gibeon. There, upon the brazen altar that stood before the Tabernacle of the Congregation which Moses had made, Solomon offered a thousand burnt offerings unto the Lord. (**2 Chronicles 1:3** ³ So Solomon, and all the congregation with him, went to the high place that *was* at Gibeon; for there was the tabernacle of the

stalls of horses for his chariots, and twelve thousand horsemen.

²⁷ And those officers provided victual for king Solomon, and for all that came unto king Solomon's table, every man in his month: they lacked nothing.

²⁸ Barley also and straw for the horses and dromedaries brought they unto the place where *the officers* were, every man according to his charge.

²⁹ And God gave Solomon wisdom and understanding exceeding much, and largeness of heart, even as the sand that *is* on the sea shore.

³⁰ And Solomon's wisdom excelled the wisdom of all the children of the east country, and all the wisdom of Egypt.

³¹ For he was wiser than all men; than Ethan the Ezrahite, and Heman, and Chalcol, and Darda, the sons of Mahol: and his fame was in all nations round about.

³² And he spake three thousand proverbs: and his songs were a thousand and five.

³³ And he spake of trees, from the cedar tree that *is* in Lebanon even unto the hyssop that springeth out of the wall: he spake also of beasts, and of fowl, and of creeping things, and of fishes.

³⁴ And there came of all people to hear the wisdom of Solomon, from all kings of the earth, which had heard of his wisdom.

congregation of God, which Moses the servant of the LORD had made in the wilderness. **2 Chronicles 1:6** ⁶ And Solomon went up thither to the brasen altar before the LORD, which *was* at the tabernacle of the congregation, and offered a thousand burnt offerings upon it.) Think of it — a thousand burnt offerings! It shows the magnanimity of Solomon. This freewill offering pleased the Lord. That night the Lord appeared unto Solomon in a dream and said, "Ask what I shall give thee" (I Kings 3:5).

The Promises of God

Who of us have not at some time in our life been thrilled with the possibilities of such an unlimited offer. Here was Solomon, but a young man and already a king on the throne, and then God makes him such an infinite promise, "Ask what I shall give thee." Consider the immense resources at the disposal of the Almighty Creator. Nothing is impossible with God. What would your request be?

Perhaps you have considered Solomon especially favored of the Lord to receive such a great promise from Him. But let us consider the promises of God to all believers today. "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you: for every one that ask- eth receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened" (Matthew 7:7, 8). Are there any limits placed on these promises? Do we not serve the same God? If our request should be for wisdom, as was Solomon's, we can receive assurance in the fact that "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him" (James 1:5). James then adds the injunction: "But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed. For let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord" (James 1:6, 7).

Sacrifices Under the Law

This trip that Solomon made to Gibeon in the beginning of his reign was to dedicate and consecrate himself to the service of God. The offerings he made were of highly spiritual significance. They represented deep consecration and praise unto the Lord. "By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name" (Hebrews 13:15). The meaning of these sacrifices can be further understood by the prayer of David, "Let my prayer be set forth before thee as incense; and the lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice" (Psalm 141:2). God requires consecrations of men under this dispensation as well as He did under the Law.

Sacrifices Under Grace

"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service" (Romans 12:1). There is nothing unreasonable about anything that God demands of us. It is all within the bounds of our power to do; and when we realize that, it helps us in our consecrations. Sometimes parents demand unreasonable things of their children, but God never demands an unreasonable thing of His children. His demands are reasonable, and within our power to give because He has made the provision for us. Many people never think of denying themselves anything. And yet many times those seemingly little things that we could deny ourselves could be a great means to a deeper walk with God. Often people want someone else to bear their cross, but Jesus said, "If any man will

come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me" (Matthew 16:24).

Thanksgiving and Humility

"By prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God" (Philippians 4:6). It was after Solomon had offered a thousand burnt offerings that the Lord appeared unto him and told him to let his request be made known. "I am but a little child," answered Solomon, "I know not how to go out or come in" (I Kings 3:7). Such humility is the mark of a truly great man. His own words were, "Before honour is humility" (Proverbs 15:33). "The way up is down," is but another way of saying, "He that shall humble himself shall be exalted" (Matthew 23:12). Solomon's humble request for an understanding heart pleased the Lord, and He granted him an understanding heart.

Hid Treasures

Some may think that Solomon awoke from his dream the wisest man who ever lived. Undoubtedly this is no more the case than that he **went to** bed with his treasury empty and awoke with it full. God tells us, through the pen of Solomon, that it is necessary to work and apply ourselves to find wisdom. "If thou criest after knowledge, and liftest up thy voice for understanding; if thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasures; then shalt thou understand the fear of the LORD, and find the knowledge of God" (Proverbs 2:3-5). God gives natural ability, but the expansion of our wisdom and the improvement of our talent come through hard work. The Lord gives as we exert ourselves along the lines of His promises. As we use the powers that He has given us, then He develops those powers; but He expects us to put them to use. For example, when the Children of Israel came into the Land of Canaan, God did not send scourges before Israel and kill off all the heathen people before the Israelites arrived on the ground. He made Israel go out and fight their battles. He gave them victory as they fought. If they did not fight they did not get the victory.

First Things

Solomon's prayer was exactly in line with the words of Jesus: "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you" (Matthew 6:33). He did not seek for riches; he did not seek for honor; he did not seek for victory in battle; he did not seek for power. This gets down to the heart of the prayer-life, of what is pleasing to the Lord and what is not, when it comes to making petitions. The Lord wants us, in praying, to keep first things first. The Lord gave Solomon things for which he did not ask, and He will do the same for us if we seek first the Kingdom of God.

Israel's Borders

"And Solomon reigned over all kingdoms from the river [the Euphrates] unto the land of the Philistines, and unto the border of Egypt" (I Kings 4:21). Thus in Solomon's day was fulfilled the promise God gave to Abraham: "Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates" (Genesis 15:18).

A Greater than Solomon

"And God gave Solomon wisdom and understanding exceeding much, and largeness of heart, even as the sand that is

on the sea shore" (I Kings 4:29). "And there came of all people to hear the wisdom of Solomon, from all kings of the earth" (I Kings 4:34). They heard the words of Solomon, but we have the Word of a greater than Solomon — the Lord Jesus Christ.

QUESTIONS

1. Where were the Tabernacle of the Congregation and the brazen altar when Solomon began to reign?
2. Where was the Ark of the Covenant at this time?
3. Give what evidence you can of Solomon's salvation.
4. What happened the day before the Lord appeared unto Solomon?
5. List some of the great promises of God that are for His people today.
6. What are some of Solomon's instructions on how to obtain wisdom?
7. In what way was Solomon's request like seeking first the Kingdom of God?
8. Can you find a conditional promise given to Solomon (I Kings 3) which was not fulfilled?
9. What promise to Abraham was fulfilled during Solomon's reign?
10. Name some channels in which Solomon's wisdom was revealed.