

# SUNDAY SCHOOL

**A.P. 05-13-2018**

**HIGHLIGHT: 1 Kings 3:1-15**

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Solomon made an alliance with Pharaoh king of Egypt by marrying Pharaoh's daughter. Solomon brought her to live in the city of David until he finished building his palace, the Lord's temple, and the wall surrounding Jerusalem. <sup>2</sup>However, the people were sacrificing on the high places, because until that time a temple for the Lord's name had not been built. <sup>3</sup>Solomon loved the Lord by walking in the statutes of his father David, but he also sacrificed and burned incense on the high places.

<sup>4</sup>The king went to Gibeon to sacrifice there because it was the most famous high place. He offered 1,000 burnt offerings on that altar. <sup>5</sup>At Gibeon the Lord appeared to Solomon in a dream at night. God said, "Ask. What should I give you?"

<sup>6</sup>And Solomon replied, "You have shown great and faithful love to Your servant, my father David, because he walked before You in faithfulness, righteousness, and integrity. You have continued this great and faithful love for him by giving him a son to sit on his throne, as it is today.

<sup>7</sup>"Lord my God, You have now made Your servant king in my father David's place. Yet I am just a youth with no experience in leadership. <sup>8</sup>Your servant is among Your people You have chosen, a people too numerous to be numbered or counted. <sup>9</sup>So give Your servant an obedient heart to judge Your people and to discern between

good and evil. For who is able to judge this great people of Yours?"

<sup>10</sup>Now it pleased the Lord that Solomon had requested this. <sup>11</sup>So God said to him, "Because you have requested this and did not ask for long life or riches for yourself, or the death of your enemies, but you asked discernment for yourself to understand justice, <sup>12</sup>I will therefore do what you have asked. I will give you a wise and understanding heart, so that there has never been anyone like you before and never will be again. <sup>13</sup>In addition, I will give you what you did not ask for: both riches and honor, so that no man in any kingdom will be your equal during your entire life. <sup>14</sup>If you walk in My ways and keep My statutes and commands just as your father David did, I will give you a long life."

<sup>15</sup>Then Solomon woke up and realized it had been a dream. He went to Jerusalem, stood before the ark of the Lord's covenant, and offered burnt offerings and fellowship offerings. Then he held a feast for all his servants.



## EXPLAIN

Solomon is a man who is famous for his unparalleled wisdom and physical wealth, both of which were gifts from God. Solomon, David's son by Bathsheba, was chosen to be the king of Israel after David died, but the beginning of his rule was fraught with threats of an insurrection. Solomon was quick to heed his father's advice, though—and wise enough from the beginning to understand he needed help.

- v.1 Solomon's weakness for women is seen early on. Most writers who cite Jewish tradition agree that Solomon did not break the law in his marriage to Pharaoh's daughter, though Deuteronomy 7 seems to suggest that wives taken from foreign lands should convert to Judaism.

It is also worth noting an important distinction to remember when reading Scripture: Descriptive vs. Prescriptive language. Descriptive language is when the reader is being told what happened in a situation, often without making a moral judgment on it. Prescriptive language is used when the text is telling the reader to do a certain thing. Solomon had multiple wives and was a man full of godly wisdom, yes, but he was also deeply flawed. It was always God's intention for marriage to be between one man and one woman (Gen. 2:24; Matt. 19).

- v.2 A high place is an open-air sanctuary usually found on hilltops. Since there was no temple yet, the Israelites had to use what was available to them in order to sacrifice to the Lord. God never expressly condemned using pagan sites for His worship, though He did command that all of the pagan equipment be destroyed (Dt. 7:5) and that the site should be explicitly accepted by God (Dt. 12:5).
- v.6 We must remember that Solomon was born to Bathsheba after David had repented of his famous sin with her and that child had died. Every memory Solomon would have had of his father was that of a man who was living a second-chance life. Just because David had committed numerous egregious sins, he was not beyond redemption.
- vv.7-9 Solomon's request came from a place of humility rather than one of desire for physical possessions. When he asked for wisdom to be able to rule wisely, it was not so that he could amass anything for himself, but so that he could rightly rule God's people. He knew that he could not accomplish the task in a way that would please God without God's help. He wrote later in his life in Proverbs 9:10, "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." He proved it here in 1 Kings: his request for wisdom began with a right understanding of his relationship with God.



**A****APPLY**

1. What stuck out to you or challenged you in what you read in the text?
2. When presented the opportunity to get anything he asked for, Solomon prayed for an obedient heart and Godly discernment. What do you pray for? How did you learn to pray?
3. Solomon learned by watching his father walk in “faithfulness, righteousness, and integrity.” What is something you learned from watching your father or mother, good or bad? How was it modeled for you? Do you still do what you learned from watching them?
4. What does “discernment” mean to you? Why did Solomon desire discernment? Who received the benefit of this discernment?
5. Share a time when you needed Godly discernment and either you prayed for it in humility and received it, or attempted to continue on your own.

**R****RESPOND**

Pray Psalm 139:23-24 each morning this week, asking God to reveal the darkness in your life, and then respond to what He reveals.

What is something you do that you wouldn't want to pass down to your children?  
How can you take steps toward changing that this week?

