

Pray for a Wise and Discerning Heart
God will bless you with one; You will be a blessing to others.

1 Kings 3:5-15

TEXT: *At Gibeon the LORD appeared to Solomon during the night in a dream, and God said, "Ask for whatever you want me to give you." Solomon answered, "You have shown great kindness to your servant, my father David, because he was faithful to you and righteous and upright in heart. You have continued this great kindness to him and have given him a son to sit on his throne this very day. "Now, O LORD my God, you have made your servant king in place of my father David. But I am only a little child and do not know how to carry out my duties. Your servant is here among the people you have chosen, a great people, too numerous to count or number. So give your servant a discerning heart to govern your people and to distinguish between right and wrong. For who is able to govern this great people of yours?" The Lord was pleased that Solomon had asked for this. So God said to him, "Since you have asked for this and not for long life or wealth for yourself, nor have asked for the death of your enemies but for discernment in administering justice, I will do what you have asked. I will give you a wise and discerning heart, so that there will never have been anyone like you, nor will there ever be. Moreover, I will give you what you have not asked for-both riches and honor-so that in your lifetime you will have no equal among kings. And if you walk in my ways and obey my statutes and commands as David your father did, I will give you a long life." Then Solomon awoke-and he realized it had been a dream.*

In Jesus' name, my fellow redeemed:

There are several with the same name throughout ancient history and in mythology: King Midas. The best-known "King Midas" is the one of ancient Greek mythology who once given the promise that he could have anything he wanted. At once, King Midas requested that anything he touched would turn to gold. (Hence, the saying "he has the Midas touch.")

Midas was ecstatic and threw a great banquet. Everything he touched did indeed turn into gold. Everyone was amazed. But amazement turned into grave concern when Midas grabbed the leg of a turkey, which immediately turned to gold. He tried to drink his wine, but golden ice crushed his lip. But Midas cursed his prayer for gold when his little daughter suddenly jumped into his arms, and immediately she became a golden statue of the one he loved.

However, you and I would be much smarter than King Midas. We would choose our words most carefully when making our request for having anything for which we might ask. We would be like Solomon to whom the Lord did actually come with the offer: ***Ask for whatever you want me to give you.*** Like Solomon we would **Pray for a Wise and Discerning Heart.** Like with Solomon, **God will bless you with one; You will be a blessing to others.**

Solomon's father, David was dead and he was now the King of Israel. He was terrified. He makes that clear in his conversation with the Lord: ***You have shown great kindness to your servant, my father David, because he was faithful to you and righteous and upright in heart. You have continued this great kindness to him and have given him a son to sit on his throne this very day. "Now, O LORD my God, you***

have made your servant king in place of my father David. But I am only a little child and do not know how to carry out my duties. Your servant is here among the people you have chosen, a great people, too numerous to count or number. Jesus had not yet been born. The birth of the Lord Jesus wasn't scheduled by God for another 1000 years. But Solomon had faith in the Lord who was his father David's Lord. And now this same Lord appears to him with an amazing offer: ***God said, "Ask for whatever you want me to give you."***

The Bible says: ***The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom...*** Ps 111 The First Commandment requires that we "**Fear, love and trust in God above all things.**" This is what saving faith is and does. It loves, honors, respects and trusts in God above all things. Obviously, Solomon had this "beginning of wisdom." His faith gave him the humility to recognize the awesome task that he, a young man, was about to shoulder. He was to guard and lead this nation, chosen by God to be the people from whom the world's Savior was to come. So the fruit of Solomon's faith erupted in this plea: ... ***give your servant a discerning heart to govern your people and to distinguish between right and wrong. For who is able to govern this great people of yours?*** The Bible says: ***The Lord was pleased that Solomon had asked for this. So God said to him, ... I will do what you have asked. I will give you a wise and discerning heart, so that there will never have been anyone like you, nor will there ever be.*** According to Scripture, there has never been a man so wise as Solomon, either before him or after him. The Bible says: ***Solomon's wisdom was greater than the wisdom of all the men of the East, and greater than all the wisdom of Egypt. He was wiser than any other man And his fame spread to all the surrounding nations. He spoke three thousand proverbs and his songs numbered a thousand and five. He described plant life, from the cedar of Lebanon to the hyssop that grows out of walls. He also taught about animals and birds, reptiles and fish. Men of all nations came to listen to Solomon's wisdom, sent by all the kings of the world, who had heard of his wisdom.*** 1 Ki 4 And of course, he built that multi-billion dollar Temple for the Lord.

The Bible then says: ***Then Solomon awoke-and he realized it had been a dream.*** Of course, the dream came true since the Lord had actually spoken to him in that dream. But we have something better than a dream. We have God's written Word. In God's written Word we have the same promises from our Lord. Listen to this one: ***If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him.*** James 1 The Lord will not find fault with your request. He won't say, "Who do you think you are? Solomon? No! He will give it to you generously. This isn't a dream, it is written! Jesus said: ***I tell you the truth, my Father will give you whatever you ask in my name.*** Jn 16 In his teaching on prayer, Jesus also said: ***I say to you: Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. ... If you then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!*** Lu 11 To give us His Holy Spirit is the same as saying, "I will give you Wisdom.

Learn from Solomon and pray for a wise and discerning heart. Not only will God bless you with one, but you, like Solomon, will be a blessing to others.

God was pleased with Solomon's request for wisdom for it was an unselfish request. It wasn't for himself that he prayed. He didn't ask for glory and victory over his

enemies. He didn't ask for great wealth. Sometimes people think that if they only had the money then they would do great things for others. But such arrogance to think that if God would only give ME this or that then I would show how wise and generous I could be. Solomon asked for wisdom so that he could govern the Lord's people wisely and according to God's will. His humble faith wisely sought to serve the Lord and his fellow man. The Bible says: *The Lord was pleased that Solomon had asked for this. So God said to him, "Since you have asked for this and not for long life or wealth for yourself, nor have asked for the death of your enemies but for discernment in administering justice, I will do what you have asked. I will give you a wise and discerning heart ... Moreover, I will give you what you have not asked for...*

Doesn't this sound like what Jesus promises us when we search for wisdom and faith? He says: ... *do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.* Mt 6 If you are wise you will ask for faith and wisdom. You will ask for the wisdom to be a good and faithful servant of the Lord. You will ask for the Lord to help you be a good father, mother, son or daughter. You will ask how you can better serve your neighbor, your congregation, your country and even your enemies.

You won't need to pray for money or riches because the Lord will give you what you need to serve Him and others as you have asked him to enable you to do. And He will give you the wisdom to do it all to the glory of God, just as He did with Solomon.

These truths have not come to us in our dreams. These truths are written for us to know and to believe. That is the beginning of the wisdom that God promises to give.
Amen