

THE WISE CHOICE OF SOLOMON

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Lessons: *I Kings 3*

What an interesting story! The Lord appeared to Solomon and told him to **ask**. The Lord said, "Ask, what shall I give you?" (*I Kings 3:5*). And you can see from the story that this started Solomon thinking. He spoke quite a few words to the Lord as he thought, "And the speech pleased the Lord" (*I Kings 3:10*).

What if you were told to ask? What if it were you to whom the Lord said, "What shall I give you?" Would you be able to answer in a few seconds? No, you would want to be careful that you asked for something really good. We might say that we all know what we want, but if at a most important moment of our lives we were asked by the Lord, "What shall I give you?" we might not ask for things we want right now.

Solomon might have wanted some unimportant things. Perhaps he wanted riches or long life or the death of his enemies, but when it came to saying what the Lord should give him he did not ask for those. The Lord was pleased that Solomon did not ask for less important things, but turned his mind to something of greater importance.

Just think if at a certain moment you want a glass of water. Or maybe at a certain time of your life there is some article of clothing or some thing you are wishing you could buy or could receive as a present. What if it were then put to you, "What shall I give you?" Would you answer, "I want a glass of water?" Or would you answer, "I want a sweater, or a watch, or some other object"? No, you would not waste that important moment on some unimportant thing that you happened to want. At such an important moment you would turn your thoughts away from unimportant things and start to think of what is more important. Suppose someone were given a wonderful chance to ask the Lord for something, and that person said, "Well, I will not just ask for something that will last a short time. I will ask for enough money to cover my needs for food and clothing for the rest of my life." Would it be wise to ask for that?

A person could have all the food and clothing he would ever need and still not be happy. A person could have a life of ease and not be happy. A person could have riches in this world and then after death have nothing to show for it.

Which would be better to ask for, money or happiness? What good is money if you are not happy? And what is it that makes happiness? Is it not the good qualities of love and wisdom from the Lord? Is it not the great feeling of being useful and having the satisfaction of having your talents be helpful to other

people? It is so useful to pause and think of this question: “What shall I give you?”

Isn't it interesting that the question made Solomon start thinking of how lucky he was? He started to think of what good things the Lord had already done for him. He was thankful to the Lord for what the Lord had done for David, his father. And now as he prepared to become king himself, he asked the Lord to help him to be a really good king. And that did not just mean a king with lots of money. It meant a king with an understanding heart—a king with the wisdom to be of real help to people. The story is a great story, for it tells of someone who could have asked that others should serve him, but who instead asked to be given the wisdom to be able to serve others. This speech pleased the Lord.

The Lord has created each one of us to have the ability to find an everlasting happiness in a life that is helpful to others. It is pleasing to the Lord when we come to realize that this is what we really want. When we think deeply enough we will make the prayer to Him that we may be part of His kingdom, the kingdom of joy and use. Make this story a treasure. Think of it at your present age and in your thinking begin to learn what is really worth wanting and what is really worth asking for. And in the years to come in your life, turn again to this story to enter more fully into the destiny which the Lord offers you.