

Life Lesson 75
King Solomon
Text: I Kings 2, 3

Introduction

What if God offered to give you whatever you wanted. What would you pick? Lots of money? A long, healthy life? Lots of friends? God did give just that offer to Solomon, the new king of Israel..

The Story

Old King David lay in his bed, dying. He had ruled Israel for many years, and it was time for a new king. He decided that his son Solomon should be the one to lead God's people. After Solomon was anointed as king, God came to Solomon in a dream.

"I will give you whatever you ask," the Lord said to Solomon. "What would you like?"

What a question!

"Lord, you were so kind to my father, King David," Solomon replied. "Now you have given me the job of leading your people. It's a big job, and I don't know what to do. Please give me an understanding heart so that I can rule wisely.

The Lord was pleased with Solomon's answer.

"I have done it," the Lord said. "I have given you a wise and understanding heart so that there has never been anyone like you and there will never again be anyone as wise as you.

"Because you didn't ask for wealth and honor, I will give them to you, too. You will be the greatest king in the world. If you will keep my commandments, I will also give you a long life."

Solomon soon had an opportunity to use his gift of wisdom. Two women came before Solomon with a problem no one could solve.

"This woman and I live in the same house," the first woman told Solomon. "We both had little babies. Mine was just three days older than hers. During the night she rolled over on her

baby and accidentally smothered it. When she saw her child had died, she took my baby while I was sleeping and put her dead baby by my side.

“I was heartbroken when I found the child was dead, but then I saw that the dead child was hers and my baby is still alive. But she won’t give him back to me.”

“That’s not true,” the second woman said. “Her child is the one who died. The living child is mine, and I’m not going to give him to her.”

What a problem! They were by themselves in their house, so there were no witnesses. How could Solomon tell which mother was telling the truth?

Solomon had a plan.

“Bring me a sword,” he commanded. “I can’t tell who the real mother is. We’ll just cut the baby in half and give each mother half of it.”

“That’s fair,” one woman said, “Let neither of us have the child.”

“Oh, no!” the other woman said. “Please don’t kill the baby. Give it to her instead.”

Immediately Solomon knew which was the true mother. The real mother loved the baby enough to give him up in order to save his life.

“Give the baby to her, for he is her child,” the king decreed.

Everyone marveled at his wisdom. That was just the beginning. Soon people came from everywhere, even from other countries, to hear Solomon’s wise words. He was wiser than the wisest men in the world. He told of trees and animals and birds. He wrote 3,000 proverbs, or wise sayings. Many of those are written down in our Bible in the book of Proverbs.

He also wrote 1,005 songs. Some of these are in the Bible, too. He wrote some of the Psalms and the book, “Song of Solomon.” He also wrote “Ecclesiastes.”

God fulfilled His other promises, too. He gave Solomon great wealth. He built a beautiful temple for the Lord with some of his riches. He also built a beautiful house for himself. There were so many expensive things in the houses Solomon built that he didn’t even bother to count all the treasures of silver and gold.

He was famous for his wisdom, and for his wealth. People came from all over the world just to hear him and to see the wondrous things he had made.

The Queen of Sheba was one of his most important visitors. She was so surprised that Solomon could answer her hard questions and so amazed at his wealth that “she had no more spirit left in her.”

King Solomon was great and wise, and he loved God, but he was still human. That meant that he was a sinner. He made mistakes.

His biggest mistake was marrying too many wives. Families are important. God intends for each man to have just one wife. He wants the parents to train their children and teach them to do right.

How could Solomon be a good husband when had 1,000 wives? How could he be a good father to hundreds of children?

He couldn't His family wasn't happy and his children weren't wise, even though they had such a wise father. In the end Solomon's wives led him to worship other gods. What a foolish thing for the wisest man in the world to do!

He should have obeyed the command of God that Solomon himself had written down in the book of Proverbs: “Keep thy heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life.”

The Life Lesson

There are many lessons for us in the life of the wisest man in the world. What is truly important? To know God. It is better to be wise than to have great riches. We shouldn't worry about getting money and collecting things. We should concentrate on the best – on being truly wise.

I hope you will learn from the sad part of Solomon's life, too. While we live on the earth, we will always have to fight against sin. That's why we must keep our heart diligently so that nothing comes between us and God.

Review Questions

Who did David choose to be king when he was old and sick?

Solomon

What did God offer to Solomon?

He said, "I will give you whatever you ask for."

What did Solomon ask from God?

He wanted a wise heart to lead God's people.

Did God give Solomon wisdom?

Yes.

How did Solomon decide which was the true mother of the baby both women claimed?

The true mother was ready to give him up in order to save his life.

Why was Solomon famous?

For his wisdom and for his great wealth.

What queen came to see Solomon and was amazed at his answers?

The Queen of Sheba

What UNwise thing did Solomon do?

He had lots of wives.

What wicked thing did his wives lead him to do?

To worship idols.