

THE GOSPEL PROJECT

# UNIT 12

## THE NEED FOR WISDOM



1 KINGS; PROVERBS; ECCLESIASTES



MEMORY VERSE

“I am teaching you the way of wisdom;  
I am guiding you on straight paths.”

—Proverbs 4:11



# ASK FOR WISDOM

CORE PASSAGE: 1 KINGS 2:1-4; 3:3-15

## CONTEXT

As David neared death, he reminded his son Solomon of the covenant the Lord had established with him and his descendants (2 Samuel 7:1-17). David's reign had been far from peaceful, and his walk with the Lord had been far from perfect, yet he held fast to the Lord's promises and faithfulness as he passed the crown to Solomon to follow the ways of the Lord. After Solomon fulfilled his father's final requests, reined in potential threats to his throne, and solidified his rightful position as king (1 Kings 1-2), the Lord appeared to the new king in a dream with an unexpected question.

## KEY CONCEPT

**Wisdom from God is better than riches.**

As you read 1 Kings 2:1-4; 3:3-15:

- Note that David's parting words to Solomon were for the new king to walk in God's ways.
- Reflect upon the fact that Solomon could have asked for anything from the Lord, but he asked for wisdom and discernment for the role the Lord had appointed him to.



## TIMELINE

David Becomes King of Israel  
(2 Samuel 2–5)

David Sins Against God and Repents; God Forgives,  
but David Faces Consequences (2 Samuel 11–20)

Solomon Builds the Temple and  
His Palace (1 Kings 5–9)

God Makes a Covenant with David  
(2 Samuel 7)

**SESSION STUDY:** Solomon Becomes King upon  
David's Death and Asks the Lord for Wisdom (1 Kings 1–3)

## Daily Readings

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Day 1:</b> 1 Chronicles 28–29 | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Day 4:</b> 1 Kings 4–5      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Day 2:</b> 1 Kings 1–2        | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Day 5:</b> 2 Chronicles 1–2 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Day 3:</b> 1 Kings 3          | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Day 6:</b> Psalm 119        |



Scan this QR code  
to access this session's  
Scripture passages.

## PERSONAL PREPARATION

1 KINGS 2:1-4

### GODLY WISDOM SHOULD BE PASSED ON TO THE NEXT GENERATION.

*Underline the commands in this passage and highlight the promises.*

**1** As the time approached for David to die, he ordered his son Solomon, **2** “As for me, I am going the way of all of the earth. Be strong and be a man, **3** and keep your obligation to the LORD your God to walk in his ways and to keep his statutes, commands, ordinances, and decrees. This is written in the law of Moses, so that you will have success in everything you do and wherever you turn, **4** and so that the LORD will fulfill his promise that he made to me: ‘If your sons take care to walk faithfully before me with all their heart and all their soul, you will never fail to have a man on the throne of Israel.’”

#### THEOLOGY CONNECTION

**ILLUMINATION OF SCRIPTURE:** Because of the vast difference between God’s wisdom and ours and because of humanity’s sinful state, human beings are incapable, on our own, of fully grasping spiritual truth without being aided by the Holy Spirit through the process of illumination. When it comes to understanding the meaning of God’s Word, Christians do not rely ultimately upon human reason in the process of interpretation, nor do we rely solely upon an institution or body of scholars. Instead, a Christian’s ultimate reliance is upon the work of the Spirit of God, who illuminates the Scriptures in the heart and mind (John 14:15-18; 16:7-15).



When confronting David for his sin, Nathan pronounced that the sword—violence—would not depart from David’s house (2 Samuel 12:10). David’s firstborn son, Amnon, was murdered by his brother Absalom for raping Absalom’s sister (2 Samuel 13). Later, Absalom died after usurping David’s throne (2 Samuel 15–19). David’s next son, Adonijah, also tried to claim the throne as David’s successor, and elderly David initially did little to check his ambition (1 Kings 1:5-10). But the Lord had appointed David’s son Solomon to take the throne (1 Kings 1:13,17,30,35; 1 Chronicles 22:9-10). So when David was made aware of the situation, he anointed Solomon as king, putting an end to Adonijah’s plans, and Adonijah bowed to Solomon’s rule (1 Kings 1:17-53).

David charged Solomon to make right some wrongs he had endured from his own rule (1 Kings 2:5-9), but before that, he exhorted Solomon to reign according to “the law of Moses,” remaining faithful to the Lord and Israel’s covenant with Him (v. 3). David had not ruled perfectly, yet he still experienced the Lord’s faithfulness because of his humility and repentance. Therefore, David reminded Solomon that God had been faithful to His covenant with David thus far and would continue to be so if David’s line remained faithful as well.

**What are some ways you are or could be passing the wisdom of the Lord on to the next generation?**

God’s promise to bless David’s descendants for their obedience may sound transactional, but this stems from the earliest covenant God made with Abraham (Genesis 12:1-3; 15:1-20; 17:1-14), followed by His covenant with Israel through Moses (Exodus 19–24), and with David himself (2 Samuel 7). Before any of the covenant blessings or curses were established, God chose the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, through no merit of their own, to be His representatives on earth and to carry out His redemptive work. And the obedience God has promised to bless is that borne of faith in Him and His Word.

**What keeps you from walking faithfully before Lord with all your heart and soul, and how will you address those roadblocks?**

## WISDOM IS SOMETHING TO PRAY FOR AND PURSUE.

*Underline Solomon's request and highlight God's response.*

**3** Solomon loved the LORD by walking in the statutes of his father David, but he also sacrificed and burned incense on the high places. **4** The king went to Gibeon to sacrifice there because it was the most famous high place. He offered a thousand burnt offerings on that altar. **5** At Gibeon the LORD appeared to Solomon in a dream at night. God said, "Ask. What should I give you?" **6** 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. **7** 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. **8** Your servant is among your people you have chosen, a people too many to be numbered or counted. **9** So give your servant a receptive heart to judge your people and to discern between good and evil. For who is able to judge this great people of yours?" **10** Now it pleased the LORD that Solomon had requested this. **11** 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 administer justice, **12** 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. **13** In addition, I will give you what you did not ask for: both riches and honor, so that no king will be your equal during your entire life. **14** 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." **15** 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.

**Key Concept:** Wisdom from God is better than riches.

Though he loved and honored the Lord, Solomon still had areas of unfaithfulness in his life. Here he offered sacrifices and allowed his people to do so in places that were not set apart by the Lord as the place of worship.

Even though Solomon offered sacrifices at Gibeon, the Lord appeared to him there and offered to give Solomon whatever he asked. This should lead us to praise God for His patient, loving, and generous nature instead of us being impressed by any of Solomon's deeds or qualifications.

**How have you witnessed the Lord overcoming your shortcomings to show you and others His great grace?**

Based on God's words, Solomon could have had anything. This was as close to a blank check as one could ask for. But recognizing that ruling Israel was a serious task he was unprepared for, Solomon humbly asked for wisdom and discernment so that he might carry out his responsibilities faithfully. The Lord, pleased by this request, honored Solomon's response by giving him great wisdom as well as the earthly riches and renown he could have asked for.

The wisdom Solomon asked for was greater than the kind to be found on earth alone, which is selfish and envious. Saul embodied this earthly wisdom, doing what he thought was right. David and his son Solomon, on the other hand, exhibited godly wisdom for most of their lives. With the help of God, His Spirit, and His Word, they sought justice and the blessing of their people (James 3:13-18).

**How might you pursue the wisdom that only God can give?**

**GOSPEL CONNECTION**

Knowing Jesus means having the Holy Spirit to guide us in wisdom as we grow in our sanctification.



## GODLY WISDOM

*Read the passages below, and identify the words, actions, and motives that revealed godly wisdom.*

**DAVID** (1 KINGS 2:1-4)

**SOLOMON** (1 KINGS 3:3-15)

**WORDS**

**ACTIONS**

**MOTIVES**

Why should asking for wisdom from the Lord be a daily prayer?  
What can you do to be reminded of wisdom's spiritual value?

**Key Concept:** Wisdom from God is better than riches.



## HEAD

How would godly wisdom help Solomon, and how should we expect godly wisdom to help us today?

### PRAYING SCRIPTURE

Psalm 119, the longest chapter in the Bible, contains 176 verses on the beauty of God's Word. Choose one section of the psalm to read, meditate on, and pray through, noting how the psalmist specifically praised God's Word in that section.



## HEART

In what areas of your life do you need wisdom to honor the Lord and to serve others well in His name?

### PRAYER REQUESTS AND PRAISES



## HANDS

How will you encourage someone this week to seek godly wisdom and to strive to live faithfully to the Lord?

