

What Would You Ask From God?

1 Kings 3

I wish I were 17 again for one reason.

I had all the answers at 17.

Typically, we think we have the answers when we start a project, but we usually don't.

Have you noticed that wisdom always comes at the end of a journey than at the beginning?

One person knew he didn't have the answers, so he asked God for wisdom.

What Does The Bible Say?

4 The most important of these places of worship was at Gibeon, so the king went there and sacrificed 1,000 burnt offerings.

5 That night the Lord appeared to Solomon in a dream, and God

said, “What do you want? Ask, and I will give it to you!” (1 Kings 3:4–5 NLT)

God typically speaks to you when you are in a listening environment.

6 Solomon replied, “You showed great and faithful love to your servant my father, David, because he was honest and true and faithful to you. And you have continued to show this great and faithful love to him today by giving him a son to sit on his throne. (1 Kings 3:6 NLT)

Do you realize you have what you have not because of your abilities but because of God’s love?

7 “Now, O Lord my God, you have made me king instead of my father, David, but I am like a little child who doesn’t know his way around. 8 And here I am in the midst of your own chosen

people, a nation so great and numerous they cannot be counted!

(1 Kings 3:7–8 NLT)

10 That’s why I take pleasure in my weaknesses, and in the insults, hardships, persecutions, and troubles that I suffer for Christ. For when I am weak, then I am strong. (2 Corinthians 12:10).

We ask God for wisdom and help when we realize we are weak.

9 Give me an understanding heart so that I can govern your people well and know the difference between right and wrong.

For who by himself is able to govern this great people of yours?”

(1 Kings 3:9 NLT)

If God said you could have anything, what would you ask from Him?

10 The Lord was pleased that Solomon had asked for wisdom.

11 So God replied, “Because you have asked for wisdom in governing my people with justice and have not asked for a long life or wealth or the death of your enemies—12 I will give you what you asked for! I will give you a wise and understanding heart such as no one else has had or ever will have! 13 And I will also give you what you did not ask for—riches and fame! No other king in all the world will be compared to you for the rest of your life! 14 And if you follow me and obey my decrees and my commands as your father, David, did, I will give you a long life.” (1 Kings 3:9 NLT)

God blesses you when you put others first.

How Can You Obey?

14 “You are about to enter the land the Lord your God is giving you. When you take it over and settle there, you may think, ‘We should select a king to rule over us like the other nations around

us.’ 15 If this happens, be sure to select as king the man the Lord your God chooses. You must appoint a fellow Israelite; he may not be a foreigner. 16 “The king must not build up a large stable of horses for himself or send his people to Egypt to buy horses, for the Lord has told you, ‘You must never return to Egypt.’

17 The king must not take many wives for himself, because they will turn his heart away from the Lord. And he must not accumulate large amounts of wealth in silver and gold for himself. (Deuteronomy 17:14–17 NLT)

25 Solomon had 4,000 stalls for his horses and chariots, and he had 12,000 horses. He stationed some of them in the chariot cities, and some near him in Jerusalem. 26 He ruled over all the kings from the Euphrates River in the north to the land of the Philistines and the border of Egypt in the south. 27 The king

made silver as plentiful in Jerusalem as stone. And valuable cedar timber was as common as the sycamore-fig trees that grow in the foothills of Judah. 28 Solomon's horses were imported from Egypt and many other countries. (2 Chronicles 9:25–28 NLT)

Now King Solomon loved many foreign women. Besides Pharaoh's daughter, he married women from Moab, Ammon, Edom, Sidon, and from among the Hittites. 2 The Lord had clearly instructed the people of Israel, 'You must not marry them, because they will turn your hearts to their gods.' Yet Solomon insisted on loving them anyway. 3 He had 700 wives of royal birth and 300 concubines. And in fact, they did turn his heart away from the Lord. (1 Kings 11:1–3 NLT)

Fame, wealth, and women dulled the wisdom Solomon received from God.

So what is getting in your way of you obeying God?

Solomon started right but ended up wrong.

How will you end up?

Additional Notes:

If you would like to use your home to disciple others, check out our training at www.crosswaveschurch.com/host. Cross Waves has produced short videos to train you how to use your home to reach others for Christ. So please check it out.

Additional Notes:

This week's Tough Questions is from Walter C. Kaiser Jr. et al., *Hard Sayings of the Bible* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1996), 41–42.

Explore:

In David's admonition to Solomon, he used four terms to convey the specifics of the Word of God. These four words refer to the different kinds of precepts in the Mosaic law. While each of the terms has its own distinction, together they capture the essence and meaning of the Old Testament Scriptures.

Statutes or Decrees – a clearly communicated prescription of what one should do, a statute, custom, or law. The word carries the connotation of something that is engraved or permanent.

Commandments or Commands – used for the instruction of a father to a son, a king to his servants, or God to His people. It

literally means to tell or to instruct or to assign a role or a function to someone.

Rules or Judgments or Laws – a regulation, specification, or prescription intended to be obeyed, often given with penalties for noncompliance. The word carries the notion of ruling or governing.

Testimonies or Requirements – a witness, an object that is a symbol of a past event, a warning. It came to be known as a reference to God's Law and especially its nature as warnings for humanity.

Explore:

Wisdom is not the same as knowledge. By definition, wisdom is the ability to discern what is true or right. The Hebrew concept

of the word was skill in living. Knowledge, on the other hand, is information attained through study, experience, or reasoning.

Knowledge can exist without wisdom but wisdom will not exist without knowledge. Wisdom is making sound decisions and taking sound actions based on the knowledge attained. For instance, knowledge is understanding we should stop at a red light. Wisdom is applying the brakes in order to stop. Biblically speaking, knowledge is a memorization of the Ten Commandments while wisdom is adherence to or obedience to them.

Explore:

David's instructions to his son Solomon illustrate how God established the home to make disciples and transfer the faith.

Encourage parents and grandparents to talk about this truth with their children and grandchildren.

Explore:

1 Kings 2:1-4

It was a biblical custom among God's people for a father to give last words of instruction to his children, particularly his sons, before his death. Often this included a reminder of how God had worked in their past and a challenge to continue to obey God's laws and fulfill His expectations. This was also accompanied by what they could expect if they remained obedient or if they chose not to obey.

Such is the case in this passage; David was giving his son Solomon his last words of instruction and encouragement to live obediently before God. He was also signaling a transfer of power and setting the stage for Solomon's future reign. The way of all the earth (verse 2) is a euphemism for death, an expression also used by Joshua in Joshua 23:14. David recognized that his death

was imminent. His words served as both a statement of fact and as counsel to Solomon, his son and successor.

David charged Solomon to be strong, a term signifying resilience or strength of mind. Having been king of Israel for 40 years, David understood the necessity of such fortitude and wished the same for his son. Further, the king admonished Solomon to keep the charge or requirements of the Lord, a task that could only be accomplished as he chose daily to walk in God's ways. David defined the ways of the Lord using four terms that capture the varying precepts of the Mosaic law.

Solomon's obedience to the Law would result in his personal success as king but would also result in the Lord's fulfilling His promises to David regarding his descendants and the throne of Israel. (See 2 Samuel 7:12-16 for details of God's covenant with David.)

This pattern of parents teaching their children is encouraged throughout the Scriptures. Parents are to “train” their children.

Who better to train and challenge children to walk with and obey the Lord than a parent who is committed to knowing, living, and passing on the truths of Scripture?

Explore:

1 Kings 3:3-9

Chapter 2 ended by telling us that Solomon’s control of the kingdom was firmly established. Chapter 3 begins by detailing some of Solomon’s early activities as king and describing his love for God. Verse 1, however, highlighted the fact that Solomon entered into a marriage alliance with Pharaoh, king of Egypt, marrying his daughter. In the ancient Near East, this was a custom of rulers that often served as a peace treaty. While peace was a noble desire, this practice was explicitly forbidden

in the Law (Deuteronomy 17:14-17; 7:3-4; Exodus 34:12-16).

As Solomon's reign continued, this practice became even more commonplace and would eventually turn Solomon's heart away from faithfulness to the Lord (1 Kings 11:1-8).

Upon marrying her, Solomon brought Pharaoh's daughter to Jerusalem. The author is quick to reference the completion of Solomon's palace. This is an important note since, according to 2 Chronicles 8:11, she was not housed in David's palace. This is significant because the tent housing the ark of the covenant had been placed in David's palace complex. Further, according to that passage, any places the Ark of the Lord had entered were considered holy, thus Solomon's wife (Pharaoh's daughter) was not permitted to stay there.

As good as things were perceived to be in Solomon's early years as king, verse 2 tells us that the people continued to offer sacrifices at the "high places" because the permanent place of

worship had not yet been built. The Canaanites sacrificed at high places because they believed that the closer people got to heaven, the more likely it was that their prayers and sacrifices would reach their gods. While scholars are divided on the issue, verse 3 seems to cast Solomon's sacrifices at high places in a negative light. This may be based on instructions given in Leviticus 17:1-5. Once the people were established in the Promised Land, they were to only offer sacrifices in the place approved by God. Regardless of this one "blemish," it was said that Solomon loved the Lord and walked in the ways of his father David.

The most popular of the high places was Gibeon, a site approximately five miles north of Jerusalem (verse 4). Gibeon was also the location of the old Tabernacle and the brazen altar made by Moses. It was in Gibeon that the Lord appeared to Solomon in a dream and offered the king whatever he desired (verse 5). Before citing his request, the young king reflected on

the Lord's kindness to his father David (verse 6). Solomon recognized that God's goodness to David was in part due to David's faithfulness to God.

While the king was only 20 years old when he began to reign, the expression little child, used in verse 7, was a rhetorical phrase that portrayed inexperience and humility. From verse 8, it is clear that Solomon was overwhelmed with his assignment and responsibilities. After all, these were God's people, a people God had chosen and blessed abundantly, but who also had a history of being challenging to lead. Solomon did not want to fail in his leadership of the people of God.

Having acknowledged his inability to rightly rule in his own strength and wisdom, Solomon asked God for a discerning or understanding heart, one that would hear the voice of God (verse 9). Only then would he be able to lead in the way God would have him lead. The fact that Solomon referred to himself as

God's servant demonstrates he understood he would have to depend on God in order to serve effectively in his new role.

Solomon recognized that he needed more than family name, human insight, and cunning to be able to lead the Lord's people.

Beyond wisdom and understanding, Solomon also desired to be able to discern between good and evil, a trait exhibited by his father David. Twice in these verses Solomon referred to Israel as a great and numerous people.

Scripture teaches us that loving God is the first and greatest commandment (Matthew 22:37-38). Our love, however, must be accompanied by wisdom. This passage teaches us that Solomon loved the Lord (verse 3), but he also needed wisdom to make right choices. When asked by the Lord what he wanted God to give him, Solomon asked for wisdom and understanding to rule rightly (verse 9). He recognized he needed God's wisdom and knowledge to live and rule before God as his father David had.

Explore:

1 Kings 3:10-15

For believers, success centers around obeying and pleasing God.

Solomon's request pleased God (verse 10). God was pleased because wisdom is the key to accomplishing His will for our lives, and Solomon chose wisdom over selfish desires (verse 11).

The Lord was pleased that Solomon did not ask for personal benefits such as wealth or long life, but instead recognized his dire need for that which only God could give.

Because Solomon chose to ask for wisdom, God provided that wisdom, as well as the riches and the promise of a long life

Solomon had not asked for (verses 12-13). While all three came

as a direct result of God's divine favor in Solomon's life, experience tells us that those who exercise wisdom find that other blessings come with it. Solomon would prove to be the richest and most honored king of his day, traits that would prove to be beneficial to his rule of God's people. Further, if Solomon remained faithful to God's purposes and His Law, the Lord also promised the king a prolonged life (verse 14).

In verse 15, Solomon awoke from his dream and returned to Jerusalem to worship and celebrate. Standing outside the Tabernacle, Solomon offered two sacrifices to God, both of which were significant. The burnt offerings expressed complete dedication of a person to God, and fellowship offerings portrayed the fellowship God's people can have with the Lord and with each other. He also offered a feast for his entire court as a means of expressing appreciation to those who were serving alongside him. While Solomon later drifted from God, this early part of his life was very positive.

Question 1 of 5

Why do you believe or not believe in Bible miracles?

Question 2 of 5

What is the number one reason you believe in the resurrection of Jesus?

Question 3 of 5

Why is wisdom from God more valuable and important than fame and riches?

Question 4 of 5

Why do you think God was so pleased with Solomon's request for wisdom?

Question 5 of 5

What wisdom from God's Word have you already discovered, but need to more fully put into practice this week? How will you

do so?