

Granted  
June 5, 2022  
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## 1 Kings 3:3-15

Our daughter Annie is a 32-year-old wife, mom, and teacher. As she continues to mature in those roles she will sometimes say to her Mom, *“If I could, here is what I would tell 20-year-old Annie.”* Looking back on your life experiences, if you could speak to your 20-year-old self what would you say?

Talking to our 20-year-old selves is really about saying, *“If I had known THEN what I know NOW.”* At that age we had a lot to learn. In today’s passage 20-year-old King Solomon teaches us the right way to seek the wisdom we need in life.

A few points from this passage: The first step to wisdom is to know we need it and don't have it. The second step is acknowledging that true wisdom only comes from God. Once we've asked God for wisdom, we must trust Him to give it to us, and put it into practice in obedience.

God promised King David, *“When you die...I will raise up one of your descendants...and...make his kingdom strong.”* He placed twenty-year-old Solomon on Israel’s throne. Though young, Solomon was wise beyond his years.

**1 Kings 3:3–15 (ESV) —3** Solomon loved the Lord, walking in the statutes of David his father, only he sacrificed and made offerings at the high places. **4** And the king went to Gibeon to sacrifice there, for that was the great high place. Solomon used to offer a thousand burnt offerings on that altar.

- Solomon began his reign with a special worship service at Gibeon.
- If we’re seeking God’s will and wisdom, why is worship important?

**5** At Gibeon the Lord appeared to Solomon in a dream by night, and God said, “Ask what I shall give you.”

- *“Many times...God revealed His will to people through dreams...[let’s be clear] Not all dreams communicate God’s will...”<sup>i</sup>*
- What an opportunity and a test from God! *“You can ask me for anything.”*

**6** And Solomon said, “You have shown great and steadfast love to your servant David my father, because he walked before you in faithfulness, in righteousness, and in uprightness of heart toward you. And you have kept for him this great and steadfast love and have given him a son to sit on his throne this day.

- What did Solomon understand about God? What had he learned from his father David?

7 And now, O Lord my God, you have made your servant king in place of David my father, although I am but a little child. I do not know how to go out or come in.

- Solomon was a young adult; what did he mean by “*I am but a child?*”
- We’ve heard the expression: “*You don’t know what you don’t know.*” Solomon demonstrates a certain level of wisdom by confessing that.
- “*Lord, in my new role I don’t even know how to do the most basic things!*”
- Socrates: “*The only true wisdom is in knowing you know nothing.*”<sup>iii</sup>
- The first step to wisdom is to know we need it and don't have it.
- Many people of all ages struggle with confessing our lack of wisdom.
- **Proverbs 26:12 (ESV) — 12** Do you see a man who is wise in his own eyes? There is more hope for a fool than for him.
- A rhyme to remember: Believing we are wise in your own eyes is one of Satan’s great lies! Young Solomon knew he lacked the wisdom to lead.
- He also understood the size of his BIG new job as king.

8 And your servant is in the midst of your people whom you have chosen, a great people, too many to be numbered or counted for multitude. 9 Give your servant therefore an understanding mind to govern your people, that I may discern between good and evil, for who is able to govern this your great people?”

- “*This is a HUGE, IMPORTANT job and I need an “understanding mind.”*”
- The word used for understanding means “*to hear:…[to] keep on listening(1)…listen attentively…carefully…listen obediently…*”<sup>iv</sup>
- Why is NOT listening a problem? To whom should a godly leader listen?
- Solomon also asked for discernment “between good and evil.”
- **Proverbs 21:2 (ESV) — 2** Every way of a man is right in his own eyes, but the Lord weighs the heart.
- Leaders must discern who is right or wrong, what is good or evil.
- The leader can look at the facts but only God can see the “hearts” of people. The leader needs godly discernment between good and evil.
- Solomon asked: “...who is able to govern this your great people?”
- What was he really admitting to God with that rhetorical question?
- Solomon’s request proved he understood wisdom only comes from God.
- Verse ten begins with words every Christ-follower should desire to hear:

10 It pleased the Lord that Solomon had asked this.

- Solomon got an “A+” on this “test!” “*It pleased the Lord...*” Imagine a world where leaders strive to please the Lord. What would homes, companies, churches, and nations be like if leaders are striving to “please the Lord?”

**11** And God said to him, “Because you have asked this, and have not asked for yourself long life or riches or the life of your enemies, but have asked for yourself understanding to discern what is right, **12** behold, I now do according to your word. Behold, I give you a wise and discerning mind, so that none like you has been before you and none like you shall arise after you. **13** I give you also what you have not asked, both riches and honor, so that no other king shall compare with you, all your days.

- *“Because you asked only for wisdom, I’ll give you wisdom and more!”*
- This is not a secret formula for fame and fortune. This isn’t about acting humble so God will make you rich and famous! It DOES bring to mind Jesus’ words in **Matthew 6:33 (ESV) — 33** But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.
- If we’ll ask God for wisdom to carry out His purpose for us, He will give us both the wisdom and the resources needed to fulfill that purpose.
- We said, once we’ve asked God for wisdom, we must trust Him to give it to us, and put it into practice in obedience. Look at verse 14; God said:

**14** And if you will walk in my ways, keeping my statutes and my commandments, as your father David walked, then I will lengthen your days.”

- “Lengthen your days” isn’t about a long physical life. For a king it clearly meant lengthening the time of their leadership and impact.
- Sadly, some leaders stop leading with dependence and obedience and God sees fit to remove His hand of blessing on their leadership.

**15** And Solomon awoke, and behold, it was a dream. Then he came to Jerusalem and stood before the ark of the covenant of the Lord, and offered up burnt offerings and peace offerings, and made a feast for all his servants.

- Young Solomon began with worship and he responded to God’s great promises with more worship. Worship keeps us focused on God as our only true source for everything we need. Solomon understood that.
- What a great beginning for this young king! That’s not the whole story.
- Longfellow wrote, *“Great is the art of beginning, but greater the art is of ending.”*<sup>vi</sup> Spoiler alert: Solomon started well but his reign didn’t end well.
- God kept his promises in those verses. No one before or since was wiser, wealthier, or more famous, but Solomon drifted.
- Warren Wiersbe writes, *“It’s unfortunate that Solomon with all his wisdom forgot this part of the agreement and gradually drifted into sin and disobedience, and God had to chasten him.”*
- 1 Kings 11 tells us, *“...[T]he Lord was angry with Solomon, because his heart had turned away from the Lord...the Lord said to Solomon, “...you have not kept my covenant and my statutes...I will surely tear the kingdom from you...for the sake of David your father I will not do it in your days, but I will tear it out of the hand of your son.”*<sup>vi</sup>

- What a sad ending for a king who had such a great beginning. That's a lesson for all of us. If the wisest man in the world could drift, so can we.

### So, What's the Takeaway?

- The first step to wisdom is to know we need it and don't have it.
- Remember the rhyme: Believing we are wise in your own eyes is one of Satan's great lies!
- We need to "know what we don't know" and ask God to give us wisdom.
- The second step to wisdom is acknowledging that true wisdom only comes from God. Knowledge and learning are important but they are limited without the SUPERNATURAL wisdom that only comes from God.
- Once we've asked God for wisdom, we must trust Him to give it to us, and put it into practice in obedience. Sadly, this is where Solomon got off track.
- He knew what to ask for and he knew God was his source.
- Unfortunately, Solomon stopped "walking in God's ways" and "keeping God's statutes and commandments."<sup>vii</sup>
- Obsession with accumulating wealth, marrying foreign wives, affairs with sexual partners and turning to idolatry led to Solomon's unhappy ending.
- Disobedience to God is proof we're not walking in His wisdom.
- This week, let's imitate Solomon's great beginning and ask God to give us the grace to walk in obedience so we can have a happy ending that pleases Him.

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<sup>i</sup> Tyndale House Publishers. (2015). [\*Holy Bible: New Living Translation\*](#) (2 Sa 7:12). Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House Publishers.

<sup>ii</sup> Lifeway Explore the Bible Leader Guide - God guided the patriarch Jacob in this way (Gen. 28:12-15), as well as Jacob's son Joseph (Gen. 37:5-11). He also revealed His will to Pharaoh, king of Egypt, through dreams Joseph interpreted (Gen. 40:1-7; 41:14-32). God guided Joseph, the earthly father of Jesus, through dreams on several occasions (Matt. 1:20; 2:13,19-20, 22).

<sup>iii</sup> [https://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/socrates\\_101212](https://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/socrates_101212)

<sup>iv</sup> Thomas, R. L. (1998). [\*New American Standard Hebrew-Aramaic and Greek dictionaries : updated edition\*](#). Anaheim: Foundation Publications, Inc.

<sup>v</sup> <https://quotepark.com/quotes/1938609-henry-wadsworth-longfellow-great-is-the-art-of-beginning-but-greater-the-art/>

<sup>vi</sup> [\*The Holy Bible: English Standard Version\*](#). (2016). (1 Ki 11:9–12). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

<sup>vii</sup> [\*The Holy Bible: English Standard Version\*](#). (2016). (1 Ki 3:14). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.