

*“As for whatever you'd like, and it will be yours.”* It's the offer that most people would like to be made to them. What would you have? I'm not going to ask for your answers as I'm sure that we'd all give an answer similar to Solomon's!

Yes, he could have asked for power, for riches, for his enemies to be destroyed. But he asked for wisdom. It gives us an insight into this man – he was already a mature thinker. In one sense he needed to be. As we read through the first two chapters of 1 Kings we find that there was a struggle at the beginning with Solomon having a rival in Adonijah – another of David's sons and removing some other characters from office. He was politically secure and he was now in the process of securing the nation. But how was he to do that? Rely on himself?

*7 O LORD God, you have let me succeed my father as king, even though I am very young and don't know how to rule. 8 Here I am among the people you have chosen to be your own, a people who are so many that they cannot be counted. 9 So give me the wisdom I need to rule your people with justice and to know the difference between good and evil. Otherwise, how would I ever be able to rule this great people of yours?”* What a sensible man.

But what was the nature of his wisdom? He realised that the wisdom to rule could only be God-given. He placed that dependence on God. What our knowledge and experience should tell us this evening is that what we need to deal with life and with eternity is God-give. It's Jesus and the bread and wine remind us of that total dependence we have on Him.

We also know that in making that choice God also makes us rich. In one sense that treasure is in heaven – that is already promised, but we also learn that there are other things on earth that God gives us that are real treasures. We thought about fathers this morning, but most of us have those in life that are real treasures – let's praise God for them. There are so many other things God blesses us with. Let's never forget his grace and mercy.

And we went on to read about the greatness of Solomon. In his age, he was the most powerful rule on earth. His wisdom was famed. He was celebrated. What more could a man want? God has given us so much, what more could we want.

Solomon had all this – and blew it all! That's the most amazing thing. The wisest and most celebrated man so messed up that after his death all he had achieved disappeared almost within a generation. It doesn't matter how much wisdom God gives any of us, we are human beings and the old man is always there.

Most of us are older Christians. We've been around a while. Never think yourself as having got there as far as God and life is concerned. For the mature believer, the fall is long and hard.

For Solomon, the man who build the temple, his eye for the women led him into building temples for other gods – and worshipping there himself. How could he do such a thing? He did. How could anyone who has walked with the Lord run after other things? They can. They do. If Solomon, one of the wisest men on earth could; then none of us are safe!

We are here to be reminded of Jesus this evening. We remind ourselves of his broken body and shed blood. We remind ourselves that it is only be God's love, mercy and grace we are the children of God. We remind ourselves that He has made us the people we are and blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places. This table reminds us not to be Solomons, but to be like Christ. Let's pray for His continuing help and the power of the Holy Spirit, the remain dependent on Him, and not be lured by other things.

Prayer.

1 Kings 3:4 On one occasion he went to Gibeon to offer sacrifices because that was where the most famous altar was. He had offered hundreds of burnt offerings there in the past. 5 That night the LORD appeared to him in a dream and asked him, "What would you like me to give you?" 6 Solomon answered, "You always showed great love for my father David, your servant, and he was good, loyal, and honest in his relation with you. And you have continued to show him your great and constant love by giving him a son who today rules in his place. 7 O LORD God, you have let me succeed my father as king, even though I am very young and don't know how to rule. 8 Here I am among the people you have chosen to be your own, a people who are so many that they cannot be counted. 9 So give me the wisdom I need to rule your people with justice and to know the difference between good and evil. Otherwise, how would I ever be able to rule this great people of yours?" 10 The Lord was pleased that Solomon had asked for this, 11 and so he said to him, "Because you have asked for the wisdom to rule justly, instead of long life for yourself or riches or the death of your enemies, 12 I will do what you have asked. I will give you more wisdom and understanding than anyone has ever had before or will ever have again. 13 I will also give you what you have not asked for: all your life you will have wealth and honor, more than that of any other king. 14 And if you obey me and keep my laws and commands, as your father David did, I will give you a long life." 15 Solomon woke up and realized that God had spoken to him in the dream. Then he went to Jerusalem and stood in front of the LORD's Covenant Box and offered burnt offerings and fellowship offerings to the LORD. After that he gave a feast for all his officials.

1 Kings 10:23 King Solomon was richer and wiser than any other king, 24 and the whole world wanted to come and listen to the wisdom that God had given him. 25 Everyone who came brought him a gift--articles of silver and gold, robes, weapons, spices, horses, and mules. This continued year after year.

1 Kings 11:1:1 Solomon loved many foreign women. Besides the daughter of the king of Egypt he married Hittite women and women from Moab, Ammon, Edom, and Sidon. 2 He married them even though the LORD had commanded the Israelites not to intermarry with these people, because they would cause the Israelites to give their loyalty to other gods. 3 Solomon married seven hundred princesses and also had three hundred concubines. They made him turn away from God, 4 and by the time he was old they had led him into the worship of foreign gods. He was not faithful to the LORD his God, as his father David had been. 5 He worshiped Astarte, the goddess of Sidon, and Molech, the disgusting god of Ammon. 6 He sinned against the LORD and was not true to him as his father David had been. 7 On the mountain east of Jerusalem he built a place to worship Chemosh, the disgusting god of Moab, and a place to worship Molech, the disgusting god of Ammon. 8 He also built places of worship where all his foreign wives could burn incense and offer sacrifices to their own gods. 9 Even though the LORD, the God of Israel, had appeared to Solomon twice and had commanded him not to worship foreign gods, Solomon did not obey the LORD but turned away from him. So the LORD was angry with Solomon 10 11 and said to him, "Because you have deliberately broken your covenant with me and disobeyed my commands, I promise that I will take the kingdom away from you and give it to one of your officials. 12 However, for the sake of your father David I will not do this in your lifetime, but during the reign of your son. 13 And I will not take the whole kingdom away from him; instead, I will leave him one tribe for the sake of my servant David and for the sake of Jerusalem, the city I have made my own."