

Worship Material
Receiving wisdom as a gift
Material from Roots Bible Study
Sunday 18th August

Begin with an opening prayer

Lord of all, you know our hearts, our hopes and our fears.
Please give us your wisdom to know what is best
and to serve you and those around us as best we can.

Amen.

Read 1 Kings 2:10-12; 3:3-14

Bible notes

Solomon succeeded his father, David, as king of the united kingdom of Israel and Judah. Accession is often difficult for new monarchs because of internal and external challenges to their legitimacy. This early mention of Solomon becoming fully established is a ruthless declaration, meaning that all his enemies were either put to death or banished (2:10-12).

Solomon's love for God is not disputed but affirmed. 'Only' raises the question of whether his mode of worship was appropriate (3:3-4). The high places host the worship of other deities, idols and all forms of sacrifices. The God of Abraham had no exclusive temple; therefore, King Solomon continued the tradition and the symbolism of worshipping at the most prominent high place. In this regard, God's people were indistinguishable from other nations and cultures. The distinguishing feature of their worship was the extravagance of the sacrifices (3:4).

The visitation in Solomon's dream shows God's approval. A generous God is willing to offer the king his heart's desire. Instead of hiding his insecurities, Solomon reveals his vulnerability to God; he was incredibly young, possibly not much older than a teenager, and the kingdom had passed over his older brothers. He was not versed in its administration or defence ('I do not know how to go out or come in', v.3:7). He needed an 'understanding mind' (v.9) – wisdom and knowledge – to govern God's people.

Solomon's understanding and regard for God are significant. He has an idealistic view of his father, but his understanding of God's faithfulness is sound (3:7). His insight was sufficient to make a request that pleased God. It was not selfish because he desperately wanted the best resource, capability and capacity to lead God's people. God establishes a covenant with these series of promises to Solomon. However, long life is conditional on walking in the ways of God.

Prayer

God, who is wise:

we worship and adore you!

God, whose ways are so far above ours:

we worship and adore you!

God, whose Spirit flows through all things:

we worship and adore you!

Amen.

A prayer to conclude

King of kings, you have all the wisdom, the glory and the majesty.
Continue to give us your gift of wisdom each day
so that we might serve you in all that we do.

Amen.