

8

Looking for a Leader

Studies in Samuel and Kings

Warming Up:

If God offered you any one thing you wanted, what would it be?

The Rise of Solomon: 1 Kings 1-10

The early chapters of 1 Kings describe the transition of power from David to Solomon. Around the time of David's death Adonijah (another of David's sons) unsuccessfully attempted to wrest the throne for himself. But David acted to ensure Solomon became king. Once established as king, Solomon sets about straightening out David's unfinished business and establishing his own rule.

Read 1 Kings 3:1-15

1. What expectations might we have for Solomon's rule after reading verses 1-3?
2. In verses 4-9 God appears to Solomon and says that he will give him anything he asks for. What does he ask for and why?
3. What is God's reply?
4. Solomon's "discernment in administering justice" is demonstrated in the second part of chapter 3. His reputation as a 'wise man' grows throughout his reign (see 1 Kings 4:29-34), culminating in the visit of the Queen of Sheba in 1 Kings 10. The name of Solomon has become synonymous with godly wisdom.
 - a. How would you define 'wisdom'?

b. Solomon, the Teacher of Wisdom, is usually credited with writing the book of Ecclesiastes. This book is a journey of discovery which finally comes to a conclusion in Ecc 12:9-14. How would you explain Solomon's teaching in Ecc 12:11-14 in your own words?

c. How do you 'get' wisdom¹?

5. (*optional*) Solomon was a great builder as well as a 'wise man'. He built the temple which God had promised David would be constructed by his son. At the opening of the temple, Solomon's prayer is recorded in 1 Kings 8. What insight does 1 Kings 8:22-30 give as to the purpose of the temple?²

6. (*optional*) It has been said that if Solomon was the great builder of the temple, Jesus was its destroyer. What do you make of this statement in relation to John 2:13-22 and 1 Cor 3:16-17?

For Prayer

Make James 1:5 a focus of prayer for your group. What are the particular issues for which you and/or your group seek God's wisdom?

For next week: read 1 Kings 11-12.

¹ If you get stuck, see Ps 19:7-12; Prov 1:1-7; Ps 1.

² Note also God's response to Solomon's prayer in 1 Kings 9:1-3