

GOD KEEPS HIS WORD TO SOLOMON

I Kings 4:30-31a

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“And God gave Solomon wisdom and understanding exceeding much, and largeness of heart, even as the sand that is on the sea shore. And Solomon's wisdom excelled the wisdom of all the children of the east country, and all the wisdom of Egypt. For he was wiser than all men.”

I Kings 4:30-31a

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Solomon was the wisest man who ever lived (I Kings 3:13) The reason that he was the wisest man is because he had been given the wisdom of God. *“Lo, I have given thee a wise and an understanding heart; so that there was none like thee before thee, neither after thee shall any arise like unto thee.”* (Vs 3:12) His wisdom is described as “an understanding heart”. That “heart” or “mind” is defined as “a hearing heart, a heart given to the law and right of God. To judge, to distinguish between good and evil. (i.e. Right and wrong)” (K&D. Vol.3 P. 41-42) Solomon demonstrated his deep wisdom in the case of the two women who were arguing over who was the mother of the surviving baby in chapter 3. He exhibited his understanding of the heart of the true mother when he threatened to have the child killed and divided between the two women. He would never have allowed the child to die but he understood that the actual mother would rather give the child away than see him harmed. His wise decision amazed everyone.

Because he asked God for wisdom to rule the people of God and not for wealth, victory over his enemies, or long life; God gave him all of these things. God knew that these things would make him a great king. He gave riches so that the people would have financial security and have happy lives. With victory over his enemies the people would live with peace and security. God gave him long life so that the nation would enjoy stability for those many years.

“So, king Solomon was king over all Israel.” (4:1) With these gifts in place Solomon began to reign. “Chapter four contains a list of the chief ministers of state (Vs. 2-6) and of the 12 officers placed over the land (vs. 7-20), which is inserted here to give an idea of the might and glory of the kingdom of Israel under Solomon’s reign.” (K&D. Vol. 3. P. 43-44) The kingdom of Israel extended from the Euphrates river in the north to the land of Egypt in the south. This is also mentioned in II Chronicles 9:26. *“And he reigned over all the kings from the river even unto the land of the Philistines, and to the border of Egypt.”* The information given in chapter 4 of I Kings is a report of the

circumstances of Solomon's reign as it was during the middle years of his time as king. We understand this because we know that he was a young man when he first became king. (3:7). The list of leaders given in chapter 4 include the names of two men who were married to Solomon's daughters. Therefore, as many as 20 years must have passed giving them time to grow up and marry. The verses from verse 20 through the end of the chapter are a summary of the conditions in Israel during Solomon's reign. The nation had a population of happy and contented people. *"Judah and Israel were many, as the sand which is by the sea in multitude, eating and drinking, and making merry."* (Vs. 20) It was a time of un-precedented peace. *"He had peace on all sides round about him."* (Vs. 24b) He said, *"Now the LORD my God hath given me rest on every side, so that there is neither adversary nor evil occurrent."* (5:3b) Israel under the reign of Solomon knew great security and safety "all the days of Solomon." (Vs. 25) The conditions in Israel were remarkable and were the result of the godly wisdom of Solomon. The larger lesson to be derived from this fact is that God keeps

His promises! In chapter three Solomon asked God for wisdom. This pleased the heart of God so much that He promised Solomon that he would also have riches, victory over his enemies, and peace and a long life. God said, *“And I have also given thee that which thou hast not asked, both riches, and honour: so that there shall not be any among the kings like unto thee all thy days.”* (3:13) Verse 20 of chapter four says that the people of the land were happy and prosperous enjoying the riches and honor that God had promised. The people of Israel were living in a great time of peace. *There were no wars during the days of Solomon.”* (4:24) Solomon told Hiram, King of Tyre, that as compared to his father David’s reign, *“But now the LORD my God hath given me rest on every side, so that there is neither adversary nor evil occurrent.”* (4:4) This was the result of the promises of God to give him the “life of his enemies.” (3:11) GOD KEEPS HIS PROMISES! Even to the latter days of his reign, God gave him great wisdom. God gave him “largeness of heart”. This expression means “a breadth of mind.” . . . this wisdom is concerned with mundane affairs rather

than spiritual realities.” (Wycliffe. P. 314-315) It is a “comprehensive understanding . . . signifies rather practical wisdom, ability to decide what is the judicious and useful course to pursue . . . Keeness of understanding to arrive at the correct solution of difficult and complicated problems. God gave him wisdom to make the correct choices in every case. (K&D. Vol.3. P. 54-55) *“And Solomon's wisdom excelled the wisdom of all the children of the east country, and all the wisdom of Egypt.”* (4:30) Verse 31 lists the names of wise men in the neighboring countries. His wisdom eclipsed these “children of the east.” They are forgotten and unknown today. Solomon gave us books of great wisdom. (Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon) People even today seek advice and wisdom from this great man. *“And there came of all people to hear the wisdom of Solomon, from all kings of the earth, which had heard of his wisdom.”* (4:34)

K&D = Commentary on the Old Testament in Ten Volumes.

C.F. Keil and F. Delitzsch. Vol. III. William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company. Grand Rapids, Michigan. 1982.

Wycliffe = The Wycliffe Bible Commentary. By Charles F. Pfeiffer and Everett F. Harrison. Moody Press, Chicago, Il. 1962.