

I Still Want More Series

Lesson 5: Choosing the Best Leads to MORE!

A Bible Study Lesson of
The Mt. Zion Missionary Baptist Church

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INTRO: Have you ever wanted something, but were afraid to ask for it? Or have you ever been given something, and you wanted it to be better? Or have you ever started a new job, a job you really wanted, and you were concerned about doing a really good job? Often people who are starting a new job ask others who have done the job questions about what they did to be successful. Sometimes they will read books about being a leader or their first 100 days. They will create plans and work with their mentor to get ready and set themselves up for success. In our lesson today, we see Solomon starting his reign as king of Israel. He is starting a new job. Our lesson will help us to know that we can ask for MORE and we can ask for BEST MORE.

Lesson Scripture: 2 Chronicles 1:6-13 NIV

[6] Solomon went up to the bronze altar before the Lord in the tent of meeting and offered a thousand burnt offerings on it. [7] That night God appeared to Solomon and said to him, "Ask for whatever you want me to give you." [8] Solomon answered God, "You have shown great kindness to David my father and have made me king in his place. [9] Now, Lord God, let your promise to my father David be confirmed, for you have made me king over a people who are as numerous as the dust of the earth. [10] Give me wisdom and knowledge, that I may lead this people, for who is able to govern this great people of yours?" [11] God said to Solomon, "Since this is your heart's desire and you have not asked for wealth, possessions or honor, nor for the death of your enemies, and since you have not asked for a long life but for wisdom and knowledge to govern my people over whom I have made you king, [12] therefore wisdom and knowledge will be given you. And I will also give you wealth, possessions and honor, such as no king who was before you ever had and none after you will have." [13] Then Solomon went to Jerusalem from the high place at Gibeon, from before the tent of meeting. And he reigned over Israel.

Background of Lesson: Solomon assumed the role of King of Israel just prior to the death of his father David. David left Solomon with a strong kingdom and set him up for success. Prior to becoming king, Solomon was tasked by God and David with building the Lord's temple. 1 Chronicles 28:6 *"He said to me: 'Solomon your son is the one who will build me house and my courts, for I have chosen him to be my son and I will be his father'".*

In this statement, David demonstrates his close relationship with God and proclaims that God has chosen Solomon to succeed David as the King of Israel. David also provided Solomon with the tools and resources (1 Chronicles 29) to build the temple and serve as king. He prayed to God that Solomon would be faithful and serve the Lord. Solomon stepped into a particularly good job. He was set up by his predecessor to succeed and to reign effectively.

Worship First vs 6-7

[6] Solomon went up to the bronze altar before the Lord in the tent of meeting and offered a thousand burnt offerings on it. [7] That night God appeared to Solomon and said to him, “Ask for whatever you want me to give you.”

Solomon started his reign from a good place. He didn't start his job in the middle of a crisis or during a recession. He started during a period of prosperity. One of Solomon's first acts as king was to travel to Gibeon, where the Tabernacle of Meeting was, and give worship to God. This demonstrated Solomon's understanding of his responsibility to serve God. It also was an act that reinforced the covenant that God established with David in which David's kingdom or house would rule forever. (1 Chronicles 17:7-14) After Solomon offered his worship to God, he hears from God directly. The pattern shown here is significant. Solomon worships FIRST, and then God speaks. Often, we want God to speak to us but we have not taken on a position of worship. To worship is to acknowledge God's worth and to submit to His will. Solomon worships and God communes with him.

Imagine God coming directly to you and offering to give your exact request. Could it be that God recognized that Solomon was wise even as a new king? Many of us would ask for power or riches. Solomon, however, had something entirely different in mind.

[7] That night God appeared to Solomon and said to him, “Ask for whatever you want me to give you.”

- Think back to a time when you were starting a new job, what did you do first?
- How many times do we miss hearing from God because we do not take time to give Him worship?
- What are ways that you can use your job, school, or volunteer work to serve God?

Asking for the Best vs 8-10

[8] Solomon answered God, “You have shown great kindness to David my father and have made me king in his place. [9] Now, Lord God, let your promise to my father David be confirmed, for you have made me king over a people who are as numerous as the dust of the earth. [10] Give me wisdom and knowledge, that I may lead this people, for who is able to govern this great people of yours?”

God gives Solomon, and us, permission to ask for what we want from Him. Solomon recognizes the enormity of his new job. He comes before God with humility and boldness. Solomon knew about the covenant that God made with Abraham and David to have His people be as *numerous as the dust of the earth* (vs 9). He recognized that to rule effectively over such a great responsibility he would need MORE. He requested knowledge and wisdom so that he could lead by example and authority. He also recognized that without God’s help, he would not be successful vs 10 *“for who is able to govern this great people of yours.”* Solomon’s request for MORE is an act of humility and submission to God. At the same time, his request is bold and courageous.

In Hebrews 4:16 NKJV we are taught:

Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

This verse along with God’s instructions to Solomon in vs 7 gives reassurance that God wants us to come to Him and ask for what we need. Remember Hannah from lesson 1, when she humbled herself and turned her problem over to the will of God, there was a distinct shift in her demeanor and situation. Hezekiah, from the previous lesson, also understood that we can approach God with our requests.

- How can you use God’s statement to *“Ask for whatever you want me to give you”* to help you throughout the day?
- Why do you think Solomon asked for wisdom and knowledge?
- When should you come boldly to God?

Solomon first acknowledges the power of God and the authority of God to place him in this job. He then asks for MORE, but not more power, or riches. Solomon asks God for wisdom and knowledge so that he can be a better leader. Solomon is starting his new job and is turning to God to help him do the best job possible. Why is this the best choice? Think of the enormity of the task. Solomon would lead God's people as his father did which were pretty big shoes to fill. Solomon recognized that he could not become a great leader if he did not have the Great God leading him. The humility to recognize one's limitations and then to submit to one greater opened the door to MORE.

A Path to MORE -
Humility &
Submission

MORE BLESSINGS vs 11-13

[11] God said to Solomon, "Since this is your heart's desire and you have not asked for wealth, possessions or honor, nor for the death of your enemies, and since you have not asked for a long life but for wisdom and knowledge to govern my people over whom I have made you king, [12] therefore wisdom and knowledge will be given you. And I will also give you wealth, possessions, and honor, such as no king who was before you ever had and none after you will have." [13] Then Solomon went to Jerusalem from the high place at Gibeon, from before the tent of meeting. And he reigned over Israel.

Blessings On Blessings

Solomon's request for wisdom was not self-centered but rather it focused on how he could best lead God's people. He did not seek to be the top leader or earn more money or get the next promotion. Solomon wanted to be a servant of God. He was a true Servant Leader. God responds in an amazing and powerful manner. He grants the request of Solomon for wisdom and knowledge. Then God does even MORE! Because Solomon made his request with humility and from a place of servanthood, God granted him wealth. God favored him and blessed him with MORE blessings.

Solomon successfully reigned over Israel for 40 years. Solomon was known for his great counsel and wisdom. His rule was also marked by prosperity and growth. He built the first temple in Jerusalem. He expanded the geographical footprint of Israel and ensured that the cities of Israel were secured. The Queen of Sheba praised God for the success of Solomon in 2 Chronicles 9:

Vs 8 Praise be to the Lord your God, who has delighted in you and placed you on his throne as king to rule for the Lord you God. Because of the love of your God for Israel and his desire to uphold them forever, he has made you king over them to maintain justice and righteousness.

Vs 22 King Solomon was greater in riches and wisdom than all other kings of the earth.

Solomon asked God for wisdom and knowledge so that he could be a good leader. Solomon turned to God first as he was starting something new. God in His grace and infinite power responded with MORE.

- What is it that you want God to do in your life?
- How has He blessed you with More?
- How do you respond when God gives you More?

BUT WHY: Why would God respond to Solomon in such a way? It is simple. Solomon prayed a God-centered and God-sized prayer. His request was in God's will. The clue to this request being answered as prayed was that Solomon's prayer focused outward rather than inward. His prayer would have benefit to more than just himself. How often are you asking for God-sized and God-centered blessings? As we conclude this lesson, consider the last "big" request you had of God. What about that request could be modified so that it included what God desires of us and for us? Was that prayer for the best or simply for you?

Closing prayer: God thank you for granting us the opportunity to come to you with what we want. Help me to approach you with humility and boldness and ask for MORE. Help me to turn to you first. I pray that Your will be done in my life. Thank you for the blessing of the BEST MORE. Amen.