

1 **Tithe Page**

2 **Scripture Reading**

- At Gibeon the LORD appeared to Solomon during the night in a dream, and God said, "Ask for whatever you want me to give you." (1 Kings 3:5 NIV)
- Solomon answered, "You have shown great kindness to your servant, my father David, because he was faithful to you and righteous and upright in heart. You have continued this great kindness to him and have given him a son to sit on his throne this very day." (1 Kings 3:6 NIV)

3 **Scripture Reading**

- "Now, O LORD my God, you have made your servant king in place of my father David. But I am only a little child and do not know how to carry out my duties." (1 Kings 3:7 NIV)
- "Your servant is here among the people you have chosen, a great people, too numerous to count or number." (1 Kings 3:8 NIV)
- "So give your servant a discerning heart to govern your people and to distinguish between right and wrong. For who is able to govern this great people of yours?" (1 Kings 3:9 NIV)

4 **Scripture Reading**

- The Lord was pleased that Solomon had asked for this. (1 Kings 3:10 NIV)
- So God said to him, "Since you have asked for this and not for long life or wealth for yourself, nor have asked for the death of your enemies but for discernment in administering justice, I will do what you have asked." (1 Kings 3:11 NIV)
- "I will give you a wise and discerning heart, so that there will never have been anyone like you, nor will there ever be." (1 Kings 3:12 NIV)

5 **Introduction**

- Some of you will remember the days when "research" involved heading down to the local library.
- It meant scouring the card catalog (which had actual paper cards), and searching by topic, author or title.

6 **Introduction**

- We might have needed to do a search in the Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature, or pull a reference book off the shelf to find the answer to a particular question or problem.
- Perhaps we had to ask the librarian for some help to get the information we needed.

7 **Introduction**

- The advent of the personal computer and the Internet changed all that, and now "Googling" a question is a quick way to get an answer.
- In fact, it's the first step for most.

- But even this involves physically typing some words on a keyboard and, well, in an age when information comes at us fast and furious, who has time for typing?

8 Introduction

- These days, all we need to do is to punch one button and ask the robotic assistant in our pocket-sized smartphones to probe the questions of the universe.
- And not only can we generally get the information we're looking for right in the palm of our hand, we can also get it in the voice, accent, language and style we prefer.

9 Introduction

- Even though your digital assistant can help you with a lot of information like the weather forecast, the score of last night's game, or remedies for the common cold, it's a lot less helpful with questions that are ambiguous or open-ended.
- Ask a question like, "What's the meaning of life?" and your phone is more likely to act like a politician and duck the question.

10 Introduction

- Here are some examples I've tried with Siri, Apple's digital assistant.
 - Question: Which came first, the chicken or the egg?
 - Siri's answer: "I checked their calendars. They both have the same birthday!"
 - Question: How much wood would a woodchuck chuck if a woodchuck could chuck wood?
 - Siri's answer: "Just because it could, doesn't mean that it would."
 - Question: Where is Elvis Presley?
 - Siri's answer: "My sources tell me Area 51. But that's classified."
 - Another answer Siri gives is, "My sources say he has left the building."

11 Yahweh's offer

- Sure, these are the kinds of questions you might fire off at your digital assistant if you're really bored.
- It's clear, though, that Siri and other forms of technology like her are not privy to all the answers in the universe.
- For answers to these kinds of questions, you need to go with a voice that has a lot more bandwidth than your phone can access.
- You need to ask Yahweh! (God)

12 Yahweh's offer

- Solomon was a young man when David died, and suddenly the weight of ruling Israel fell to him.

- It was at that point, however, that God made an offer to the young king that makes Siri's "What can I help you with?" offer seem exceptionally lame by comparison.
- The God of the whole universe says to Solomon, "Ask what I should give you."

13 **Yahweh's Offer**

- Can you imagine God coming to you tonight and saying to you, "Ask for whatever you wish, and I'll give it to you"?
- What would you ask for?
 - Some would ask for wealth, no doubt, others for better health.
 - Some may ask for a relationship, others for talent, still others might ask for more wishes!

14 **Yahweh's Offer**

- The question, however, is whether we'd know what to do if we actually got what we wished for.
 - Lottery winners, for example, see their wishes come true when they hit the big jackpot, but most lottery winners wind up miserable because they don't have a good plan for the money.
 - We might ask God for good health, but we may not have the ability to maintain it.
 - We could have a special talent or ability, but squander it in the wrong place.
- Maybe this is why this incident stands out in the Scriptures.

15 **Solomon's request**

- Solomon, however, asked for wisdom, which is a really great response to God's offer.
- Instead of asking for something temporary to benefit himself, Solomon wanted a framework for managing his life and his leadership as the king of Israel.
- He recognized that, on his own, he was young and inexperienced and "did not know how to go out or come in" (v. 7).
- He needed help and a background from which to make decisions, so he asked for wisdom. "Give your servant therefore an understanding mind to govern your people, able to discern between good and evil; for who can govern this your great people?" (v. 9).

16 **Solomon's request**

- Solomon's request for wisdom pleased God so much that God also offered him the things he didn't ask for: riches and honor, an incomparable royal reputation and long life.
- But there was also a caveat. All these things would be added to Solomon "if you will walk in my ways, keeping my statutes and my commandments, as your father David walked" (vv. 13-14).
- For God, wisdom wasn't a one-time offer but the product of a long relationship -- a constant asking and constant conversation between God and the king.

17 **Solomon's Downfall**

- We know how this eventually turned out, however. Solomon became known for his wisdom and his riches, but he gradually began turning his attention away from God and away from wisdom toward the lesser things God had given him.
- He turned to his gold, to building up military might and to alliances via marriage to foreign princesses (10:23-11:13).
- These were the very things that God had warned the kings of Israel to avoid (Deuteronomy 17:16-17).

18 **Solomon's Downfall**

- So then, Solomon's story is a cautionary tale for the people of God.
- We need wisdom, to be able to discern good and evil, so that we can keep ourselves in God's good, pleasing, and perfect will.
- When we do, we'll enjoy His presence, power, and grace, which is the key to life.
- So then, gaining godly wisdom should always be a very high priority for us as well.

19 **New Testament - Wisdom**

- In the Apostle Paul's letter to the Ephesians, he states . . . ever since I heard about your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all the saints, I have not stopped giving thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers. (Ephesians 1:15-16 NIV)
- I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, (Ephesians 1:17a NIV)
- Why? so that you may know him better. (Ephesians 1:17b NIV)

20 **New Testament - Wisdom**

- I pray also that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that . . .
 - you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints, and
 - his incomparably great power for us who believe. (Ephesians 1:18-19 NIV)
- So then, if the Apostle Paul made this a point that we be filled with wisdom so that we can know God better, shouldn't we also?

21 **New Testament - Wisdom**

- To the Philippian church the Apostle Paul prays a similar prayer.
- And this is my prayer: that your love may abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight, so that you may be able to discern what is best and may be pure and blameless until the day of Christ, filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ — to the glory and praise of God. (Philippians 1:9-11 NIV)

22 **New Testament - Wisdom**

- To the church at Colossi the Apostle Paul prays again a similar prayer.

- For this reason, since the day we heard about you, we have not stopped praying for you and asking God to fill you with the knowledge of his will through all spiritual wisdom and understanding.
- And we pray this in order that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and may please him in every way: bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God, (Colossians 1:9–10 NIV)

23 **New Testament - Wisdom**

- To summarize these prayers, the following is my paraphrase.
 - Now that I have evidence that you are called and chosen of God, I pray that God will fill you with the knowledge of His will, so that you can keep yourselves blameless before Him no matter the trial and so enter into everything that God has for you both now and every more.
- In other words, having wisdom on how to keep ourselves holy in an unholy world, so that God's promises can be fulfilled in our lives, is great gain.
- So then, if this is the case, why don't we ask God for wisdom more often?

24 **New Testament - Wisdom**

- If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him. (James 1:5 NIV)
- But when he asks, he must believe and not doubt, because he who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind. (James 1:6 NIV)
- That man should not think he will receive anything from the Lord; he is a double-minded man, unstable in all he does. (James 1:7–8 NIV)
- So then, we ought to encourage each other in the faithfulness of God. If we ask for wisdom, God will surely give it to us. Why? Because he wants us to succeed in overcoming our trials.

25 **Summary**

- When we ask God for wisdom—especially as it relates to His plans and purposes, it pleases Him greatly.
- Not only does it please the LORD, but it also opens up where He can also give us much more.
- God wants us to be overcomers, which means we need all forms of His grace—especially wisdom.
- So then, when you are in the midst of a trial, ask God for wisdom!
- Just asking for wisdom brings a blessing in and of itself.
- Therefore, let us encourage each other to believe God for wisdom!

26 **Conclusion**

- Be very careful, then, how you live — not as unwise but as wise, . . . because the days are evil. Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord's will is. (Ephesians 5:15–17 NIV)

- If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him. (James 1:5 NIV)
- Therefore, when we ask ASK YAHWH for wisdom, we will be blessed in more ways than we could ever imagine.
- AMEN