

December 6, 1903

I Kings 3:4-15

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5. In Gibeon the Lord appeared to Solomon in a dream by night: and God said, Ask what I shall give thee.

6. And Solomon said, Thou hast showed unto thy servant David my father great mercy, according as he walked before thee in truth, and in righteousness, and in uprightness of heart with thee; and thou hast kept for him this great kindness, that thou hast given him a son to sit on his throne, as it is this day.

7. And now, O Lord, my God, thou hast made thy servant king instead of David my father: and I am but a little child: I know not how to go out or come in.

8. And thy servant is in the midst of thy people which thou hast chosen, a great people, that cannot be numbered nor counted for multitude.

9. Give therefore thy servant an understanding heart to judge thy people, that I may discern between good and bad: for who is able to judge this day so great a people?

10. And the speech pleased the Lord, that Solomon had asked this thing.

11. And God said unto him, Because thou hast asked this thing, and hast not asked for thyself long life; neither hast asked riches for thyself, nor hast asked the life of thine enemies; but hast asked for thyself understanding to discern judgment;

12. Behold, I have done according to thy word: 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.

13. And I have also given thee that which thou hast not asked, both riches and honor: so that there shall not be any among the kings like unto thee all thy days.

14. And if thou wilt walk in my ways, to keep my statutes and my commandments, as thy father David did walk, then I will lengthen thy days.

15. And Solomon awoke; and, behold, it was a dream. And he came to Jerusalem, and stood before the ark of the covenant of the Lord, and offered up burnt offerings, and offered peace offerings, and made a feast to all his servants.

Gibeon means lifted up, exalted. It is a symbolical description of that state of mind which results from denials (sacrifices) and affirmations or prayers. When in this exalted state the mind is open to Divine inspiration, and spiritual truths often flow into it while the individual is outwardly conscious. But the most common mode of communication between the Spirit and man is in dreams. When the thought is concentrated upon spiritual themes and exercises, there sets in a flow of ideas from on high and the Lord talks to man in the vigils of the night. Solomon is described as in this state of religious fervor when the Lord talked to him in a dream.

This mode of communion between man and God was common in Bible times, but is now quite out of style. Should a minister of the gospel in this practical day announce to his congregation that he had been told to do a certain thing by the Lord in a dream, he would be promptly hushed up, or asked to resign, on the ground that he manifested a weak mind. Yet we are told that in addition to this instance, the Lord spoke in dreams to Abraham, Jacob, Joseph, Pharaoh, Daniel, Nebuchadnezzar, Joseph husband of Mary, Pilate's wife, Paul, and many others. In the Greek and Latin classics a great number of instances are on record of remarkable dreams—as of Julius Cæsar's wife, Calpurnia, and the dream of Brutus before his last battle. Homer says dreams are sent by the gods.

In modern times men of all stations in life have been instructed in dreams, and some of the great events of statesmanship have been inspired thereby. The wonderful prophetic dream of Washington of the future of this nation, and the story told of Lincoln of the dream that urged him to issue the Emancipation Proclamation, are examples.

There is a realm of mind where pure Truth exists without the alloy of human opinion. When man is untrammelled in thought, and stimulated by an unusual fervor along certain lines, he rises to this realm and he transcends human rules in doing things. of the Spirit. No man can be led of the Spirit who has fixed ideas of religion. There must be the greatest flexibility of mind in order to adjust oneself to the many sided aspects of Being. God is like a diamond flashing many faces into the eyes of the beholder.

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December 6, 1908

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7 And now, O Jehovah my God, thou hast made thy servant king instead of David my father: and I am but a little child; I know not how to go out or come in.

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12 Behold, I have done according to thy word: lo, I have given thee a wise and understanding heart; so that there hath been none like thee before thee, neither after thee shall any arise like unto thee.

13 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.

14 And if thou wilt walk in my ways, to keep my statutes and my commandments, as thy father David did walk, then I will lengthen thy days.

15 And Solomon awoke, and, behold, it was a dream: and he came to Jerusalem, and stood before the ark of the covenant of Jehovah, and offered up burnt offerings, and offered peace offerings, and made a feast to all his servants.

Gibeon means "pertaining to a hill." It was a sacred place five or six miles from Jerusalem, where the tabernacle had been erected for a time, and with its buildings had been a center of worship.

People are continually running to and fro seeking spiritual knowledge, and asking how they shall know what the will of God is, that they may do it. Here the first step toward learning the will of God is given, "Go up into the hill of the Lord." This Gibeon is an attitude of mind and may be attained in various ways. It is written, "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." The word "fear" is in the original "reverence;" it is then the reverence of the Lord that opens the way to spiritual understanding. An earnest desire to know God is often all that is necessary to put the mind in touch with the kingdom within. Jesus said, "Ask and ye shall receive."

But still another step is required to make permanent in mind the spiritual condition, and that is sacrifice. "A thousand burnt offerings did Solomon offer upon that altar." The mind that is filled with thoughts of sense must give them up to make room for the new spiritual thoughts which the Lord will give.

Man's mind and body may be compared to a hive of bees. There is a constant gathering of substance by the busy thoughts, which is stored up in ten thousand little pockets in the subconsciousness. If new honey is desired the old must be taken away. If you want your thoughts to gather the sweets of the Spirit, put away the stale honey of the old material life.

You may think you are not especially attached to materiality, but self-examination will doubtless show you that there are unseen thought attachments that hold you. A small boy, whose hand was caught in a narrow-mouthed vase, was told to open his hand loosely.

He answered, "If I do that I will drop my penny." The reason his hand would not come out was that he was gripping a penny all the time.

It may be that the creatures you are to sacrifice are the animal appetites or passions, or some of the so-called enjoyments of mere animal existence. Where bodily comfort has been considered of importance there gradually creeps over one hoggish habits. Instead of getting up in time for church Sunday morning we stay in the warm straw with the hog, under the delusion that we are resting from the week's labors. Actual rest is attained through a change of thought which may be had in religious service. Right here is an opportunity to sacrifice the creature unto the Lord. Again, it may be that you have money, or clothes, or food, or some material thing, and are clinging to them, fearing that you will come to want. This is animal selfishness and must be "sacrificed unto the Lord" before you can realize the things of the Spirit. Begin at once to give to some good cause, or worthy person, part of your money, or whatever you are hoarding. Denial of material bondage will open the way to this "letting go," and you will find it easy and natural.

Solomon took the attitude of a little child, which is receptivity to higher authority, and obedience. Jesus understood the necessity of this state of mind in those who come under Divine guidance, and he said, "Ye must become as a little child."

The only safe spiritual development is based on an "understanding heart." Superficial people think that they would be supremely happy if the Lord would pour out upon them riches and honor. But do they know how to handle these things that are so apt to lead to misery with those who are inexperienced? The power of money is considered great in the world, and it masters the man unless he is very wise.

Understanding should be the foundation of all spiritual seeking. If we earnestly strive to find God he will open the way of communication. When the outer thoughts are quiet in sleep the Spirit finds easy access to man's soul. This narrative of Solomon's dream reads as if God talked to him, but the almost universal testimony of those who communicate with the Lord in dreams, is that he uses symbols, like the dreams of Jacob, Joseph, Daniel and Peter. The mind makes a mental picture of everything that comes within its ken, and if we were still enough mentally, and free from the darkness of sense deception, we would naturally see these pictures in one another's minds, and communication would be open and universal without language. This realm of thought-pictures is where God meets man consciously and communicates with him. Watch your dreams and rightly interpret them and you will open up a source of instruction far superior to the wisdom of men.

September 15, 1918

I Kings 3:4-15

4. And the king went to Gibeon to sacrifice there; for that was the great high place: a thousand burnt-offerings did Solomon offer upon that altar.
5. In Gibeon Jehovah appeared to Solomon in a dream by night; and God said, Ask what I shall give thee.
6. And Solomon said, Thou hast showed unto thy servant David my father great lovingkindness, according as he walked before thee in truth, and in righteousness, and in uprightness of heart with thee; and thou hast kept for him this great lovingkindness, that thou hast given him a son to sit on his throne, as it is this day.
7. And now, O Jehovah my God, thou hast made thy servant king instead of David my father: and I am but a little child; I know not how to go out or come in.
8. And thy servant is in the midst of thy people which thou has chosen, a great people, that cannot be numbered nor counted for multitude.
9. Give thy servant therefore an understanding heart to judge thy people, that I may discern between good and evil; for who is able to judge this thy great people?
10. And the speech pleased the Lord, that Solomon had asked this thing.
11. And God said unto him, Because thou hast asked this thing, and hast not asked for thyself long life, neither hast asked riches for thyself, nor hast asked the life of thine enemies, but hast asked for thyself understanding to discern justice;
12. Behold, I have done according to thy word: lo, I have given thee a wise and an understanding heart; so that there hath been none like thee before, neither after thee shall any arise like unto thee.
13. And I have also given thee that which thou hast not asked, both riches and honor, so that there shall not be any among the kings like unto thee all thy days.
14. And if thou wilt walk in my ways, to keep my statutes and my commandments, as thy father David did walk, then I will lengthen thy days.
15. And Solomon awoke; and behold, it was a dream: and he came to Jerusalem, and stood before the ark of the covenant of Jehovah, and offered up burnt-offerings, and offered peace-offerings, and made a feast to all his servants.

LESSON INTERPRETATION

What, in consciousness, does "Solomon" represent?

"Solomon" means *peaceful*, and typifies that state of mind established in consciousness when the soul is unified with Wisdom and Love.

What, in consciousness, does "Gibeon" symbolize?

"Gibeon" means *pertaining to a hill*, and symbolizes that high point in the Silence which man reaches when he realizes his unity with Supreme Being.

Why is "Gibeon" a place of sacrifice?

"Gibeon," the high point in spiritual consciousness, is called a place of sacrifice because it is here that man lets go of personal ideas and desires, and seeks only the presence of God.

What essential steps must be taken before man can enter into the Spirit?

First, there must be an earnest desire to know and feel the presence of God. Second, man must be willing to eliminate sense thoughts from consciousness. This is accomplished through denying error expression, either in thought or act, and affirming the substantial ideas of Spirit.

Why is it essential that one become as "a little child" in his attitude when he desires to be taught by the Spirit?

The childlike attitude is one of receptivity and obedience. This state of mind invites an inflow of spiritual ideas from the one Source of Wisdom.

August 29, 1920

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LESSON INTERPRETATION

Give the meaning of Gibeon.

The word Gibeon means a high, illumined state of consciousness. It was this attitude of mind which Solomon, the newly anointed king, realized before he received the great message of wisdom from the Lord.

What other preparation did Solomon go through, in order to receive this blessing?

He presented "burnt offerings" unto Jehovah, or in other words he consciously gave up the sense life that he might gain the spiritual. The prayer for the things of the Spirit, and a willingness to give up all thoughts of physical pleasure, transmute or burn up the beasts of the body.

Through inner prayer he came into such close union with spiritual ideals that God was able to appear to him in a dream, and to reveal to him that he might have anything he asked for.

What was Solomon's wise choice?

He asked for wisdom to deal justly with the people of Israel, to judge righteously among them, but did not ask for riches or for personal glorification.

Why did this please Jehovah?

It pleased Jehovah because Solomon had come into the consciousness of unselfish love and the desire for spiritual light, that he might serve mankind. This is the kingdom of righteousness and wisdom, through the power of which all other things are added.

What other blessings does the wisdom of Spirit insure?

Spiritual wisdom insures honor and riches and long life. Obedience unto the Lord makes the mind receptive and open to Divine Inspiration, and leads always into paths of peace and joy and the fullness of all Good.

July 2, 1939

I Kings 3:5-15

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Lesson Interpretation

What is the significance of Solomon's going to Gibeon to sacrifice and of having a dream there?

Gibeon (high hill), the high point in spiritual consciousness, is called a place of sacrifice because it is here that man lets go of personal ideas and desires and seeks only the presence of God. Moved by the responsibility that he was assuming, Solomon sought light on the course he should take in the beginning of his reign. Light came through the medium of a dream.

What proof does this lesson afford that Solomon took his kingship seriously?

The fact that even in a dream he prayed for understanding and wisdom to discharge the duties of his high estate proves that he realized the need of help from One higher than he if he would discharge his obligations creditably.

Does Solomon's prayer reveal that he already had some understanding of divine law?

The words "Thou hast showed unto thy servant David my father great lovingkindness, according as he walked before thee in truth, and in righteousness and in uprightness of heart with thee" show that Solomon understood the law of sowing and reaping. The loving kindness bestowed upon David was the result of his living near to God.

The name Solomon means "peace." Why does peace, when enthroned in the heart of man, give him a background of wisdom and discernment?

Inner peace is like silence in the heart of man. It permits wisdom, understanding, and discernment to distill in the mind like dew. Peace and wisdom are both of God, hence they go together.

Why did Solomon's "speech" please the Lord?

Solomon's desire for understanding was in harmony with divine law. Wisdom and understanding are the birth-right of man, the son of God, and he realizes them in proportion as he realizes peace of mind.

The law is that man receives as he asks. Explain why Solomon received more than he asked for.

As man expresses wisdom and discernment, these faculties possessing the power of increase cause man to develop latent gifts to which he has not given conscious thought.

"I wisdom have made prudence my dwelling . . .

Riches and honor are with me."

What truth is symbolized by the fact that Solomon was the son of David?

Love (David) creates peace, or peace is the work of wisdom and love united.

Why did Solomon, on waking from his dream, come to Jerusalem and stand before the Ark of the Covenant of Jehovah?

The Ark of the Covenant represents the original spark of divinity in man's being. The presence of the ark in Jerusalem or center of peace allowed Solomon to concentrate his thoughts on spiritual things and achieve peace, harmony, and spiritual progress such as he could not otherwise have known.

What is the meaning of the burnt-offerings and peace-offerings that Solomon offered in Jerusalem?

Sacrifices represent a refining process that is constantly going on in consciousness. Burnt-offerings to Jehovah denote a conscious giving up of the sense life in order to gain the spiritual life. There can be no lasting peace without some sacrifice.

September 4, 1927

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What is the meaning of "Gibeon"?

Gibeon means "height, lofty hills, high place." Metaphysically Gibeon represents an exalted state of mind. Gibeon was a place of worship near Jerusalem. The Jewish tabernacle was located in Gibeon for a time.

What is the etymological meaning of Solomon?

The etymological meaning of Solomon is "sun man,"

or one who has understanding, wisdom, and judgment. Nathan named Solomon "Jedidiah," which means "peaceful." The fact that Solomon had both these names indicates that the wise have peace of mind. Solomon was not only a wise man, but he was also the man of peace who built the temple for Jehovah (body temple).

What is the meaning of Jehovah's appearing in a dream to Solomon in Gibeon?

When sleep comes to one who has the light of Spirit his sense mind rests in peace; this exalted (Gibeon) state of mind opens the way for the Lord Jehovah to communicate with the sleeper.

God said to Solomon, "Ask what I shall give thee." How much wisdom did Solomon display in his asking?

Solomon exercised great wisdom in his asking. God does not place any limit upon the ocean of ideas which he gives to those who open their minds spiritually. Solomon realized that although he had illumination he was yet a mere child in experiencing the use of the divine resource. Consequently he did not ask for riches or for honor, but he asked that he might be given wisdom to discern between good and evil.

Before Solomon made his choice he sacrificed a thousand burnt offerings upon the altar. What does this sacrifice represent?

Burnt offerings were of various kinds; however, they were composed chiefly of animals. They represent man's animal propensities which he gives to the Lord (transmutes to spiritual qualities). When man has filled his mind with sense thoughts he must cleanse, purify, and lift his consciousness before he can successfully entertain spiritual ideas.

Give a concrete illustration of the manner in which mind stores its substance?

Man's mind may be compared to a hive of bees. The busy thoughts constantly gather substance; the substance is stored in thousands of little pockets (so to speak) in the subconscious mind. If new honey is desired the old must be removed. If you want your thoughts to gather the sweets of Spirit, put away the honeyed seemings of material life.

What spiritual development is absolutely necessary before one can successfully enjoy riches and honor?

One must develop an "understanding heart."

April 27, 1947

I Kings 3:5-9

5. In Gibeon Jehovah appeared to Solomon in a dream by night; and God said, Ask what I shall give thee.

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Can peace be realized among the nations without the will to peace?

No. Will must precede understanding in the making of peace. Then as understanding increases peace will become permanent.

Is the name Solomon associated with the thought of peace?

One meaning of this name is "peaceful." Solomon (the will) had peace in his kingdom, but to insure it he compromised with idolatry, and sowed the seeds of eventual disaster. When the will is directed toward outer appearances of peace instead of toward the true inner peace, it becomes ineffectual as an agent for peace.