

1 Kings 3:11

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

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;

Analysis

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;

This verse contributes to the broader narrative of Solomon's wisdom and the famous judgment, within the book's focus on Solomon's wisdom, temple building, and tragic apostasy.

The Hebrew text reveals nuances important for understanding this passage's contribution to 1 Kings' theological message about kingship, covenant, and faithfulness to Yahweh. This verse demonstrates the consequences when God's people—especially their leaders—either follow or forsake the covenant established at Sinai.

Historical Context

First Kings was written during or after the Babylonian exile (6th century BCE), reflecting on the monarchy period (10th-9th centuries BCE) to explain why the kingdoms fell. Solomon's reign (c. 970-930 BCE) represented Israel's golden age of

peace and prosperity.

Ancient Near Eastern kingship ideology viewed kings as divine representatives responsible for maintaining cosmic order through right worship. Archaeological discoveries from sites like Megiddo, Hazor, and Samaria confirm the historical reliability of 1 Kings' descriptions of building projects and administrative structures.

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Study Questions

1. How does the temple as God's dwelling place help us understand Christ's incarnation and the church as God's temple today?
2. What does Solomon's prayer and dedication teach about approaching God in worship and prayer?
3. How does this verse point toward or prepare for the coming of Christ and His eternal kingdom?

Interlinear Text

בְּדָבָר	אֶת	וְשָׁאַלְתָּ	אֲשֶׁר	אַל	עַן	אֵלֶּה	יְמִינֶךָ	וְאֵמֶר
said	And God	H413	H3282	H834	and hast not asked	H853	this thing	

וְשָׁא לָתָ	לְבָ	לְבָ	וְשָׁא לָתָ	וְשָׁא לָתָ	בְּ פֶשֶׁ
and hast not asked	H0	riches	H3808	and hast not asked	the life

מִשְׁפָט:

Additional Cross-References

Romans 8:26 (Parallel theme): Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.

1 Kings 3:9 (Judgment): 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 thy so great a people?

Proverbs 16:31 (Parallel theme): The hoary head is a crown of glory, if it be found in the way of righteousness.

Psalms 4:6 (Parallel theme): There be many that say, Who will shew us any good? LORD, lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon us.

