

Thirteenth Week after Pentecost

August 19th- August 25th, 2018

“What Should I Ask For?”

1 Kings 2:10-12, 3:3-14

Your Story

Have you ever asked for something and got so much more than you asked for? Perhaps you prayed for a child and ended up with twins. Or perhaps you asked God to help you find a job and you found one you absolutely love. Or perhaps you asked for a friend and ended up with a group of them. Talk about something you asked for and received that and so much more.

My Story and the Bible Story

As a child of the 90s, I cannot tell you how many times I watched Aladdin. It was one of my favorite movies. In Aladdin, Aladdin finds a curious lamp. And in the lamp there lives a genie. The genie gives Aladdin three wishes and tells him the rules for those wishes (for instance, he cannot wish for more wishes). Aladdin is, at first, dazzled by these wishes. But in the end, Aladdin makes the wisest and best wish of all: that the genie would be freed. Aladdin learns the things that are most important, friendship, justice, and freedom, and sets the genie free rather than wishing for something that would help himself.

God isn't a genie and He doesn't really grant wishes. But in our text for this week, He grants a wish to Solomon. Here's the text from the *Common English Version*: *“Then David lay down with his ancestors and was buried in David's City. He ruled over Israel forty years—seven years in Hebron and thirty-three years in Jerusalem. Solomon sat on the throne of his father David, and his royal power was well established...Now Solomon loved to walk in the laws of his father David with the exception that he also sacrificed and burned incense at the shrines. The king went to the great shrine at Gibeon in order to sacrifice there. He used to offer a thousand entirely burned offerings on that altar. The LORD appeared to Solomon at Gibeon in a dream at night. God said, “Ask whatever you wish, and I'll give it to you.” Solomon responded, “You showed so much kindness to your servant my father David when he walked before you in truth, righteousness, and with a heart true to you. You've kept this great loyalty and kindness for him and have now given him a son to sit on his throne. And now, LORD my God, you have made me, your servant, king in my father David's place. But I'm young and inexperienced. I know next to nothing. But I'm here, your servant, in the middle of the people you have chosen, a large population that can't be numbered or counted due to its vast size. Please give your servant a discerning mind in order to govern your people and to distinguish good from evil, because no one is able to govern this important people of yours without your help.” It pleased the LORD that Solomon made this request. God said to him, “Because you have asked for this instead of requesting long life, wealth, or victory over your enemies—asking for discernment so as to*

acquire good judgment—I will now do just what you said. Look, I hereby give you a wise and understanding mind. There has been no one like you before now, nor will there be anyone like you afterward. I now also give you what you didn't ask for: wealth and fame. There won't be a king like you as long as you live. And if you walk in my ways and obey my laws and commands, just as your father David did, then I will give you a very long life.”

Solomon asked God to make him wise. And because he asked God to help him have good judgment, he received so much more. Solomon's request made God happy. So what should we ask God for? Like Solomon, God wants us to ask Him to make us wise. God wants us to make good choices, and He knows that we need His help with that. If we ask God for help in making good choices, we will receive much more than we asked for. If we make those good choices, then good things will follow. For instance, if you choose to study for a test (a good choice), chances are pretty good that you'll get a better grade than if you chose not to study. If you choose to help someone who needs help, they will feel better because they got help and you'll feel good about helping them. God won't always give us wealth and fame like He did for Solomon. But God will bless us when we ask for His help in making good choices.

Discussion

- Ask your children to talk about times when they have made good choices. What happened?
- Has anybody in your family ever prayed for wisdom? If yes, ask about outcomes.
- Talk about ways to make good choices this week.

Pray

Ask God for wisdom to make good choices.