

Revised Version, "heavy;" hence, some have concluded that the idea of unmanageableness or difficulty of control is suggested, but the ordinary word for "great" is found in the parallel passage (2 Chron. 1. 10).

**10. And the speech pleased the Lord.** Solomon asked for such wisdom as would make him helpful to others. The Lord is always pleased with the unselfish, and with those who earnestly pray to become so.

**11. Hast not asked for thyself long life.** Most men desire long life and great riches, but what is long life without divine guidance, and what are riches without God's blessing? **The life of thine enemies.** A good man in our age might pray for long life, and even for riches, but not for the life of his enemies. Solomon's enemies were those hostile to his rule, and as Solomon regarded himself as God's representative on the earth, so he might have considered his enemies the foes of Jehovah as well. Adonijah would be regarded as his enemy, so also Haddad and Rezon (1 Kings 14 and 22). **Understanding to discern judgment,** or, more literally, "to hear judgment;" that is, know how to listen attentively to the cases brought before him, so as to be able to pronounce a just sentence. Others think that it may refer to the duty of listening to the voice of God, which would lead him unerringly in all his decisions.

**12. A wise...heart.** It must be remembered that the Hebrews most commonly make the heart the seat of the intellect or of thought rather than of the emotions. (See next lesson, 1 Kings 4. 29-34.) Nevertheless Solomon asked for more than intellectual guidance. Wisdom according to the Hebrew conception was something the same as what we understand by moral science, or, indeed, practical religion. **There hath been none like thee before thee.** If this is to be limited to the kings of Israel there is no difficulty in understanding it. But why should the words be so limited? Considering his age and opportunities he ascended the very pinnacle of fame, and had he continued to live in the fear of Jehovah, he might have ascended very much higher; but, alas, he fell into sin; he forsook God: he turned from the great fountain of life and wisdom; therefore God could not bless him as greatly as if he had remained perfect. God's blessing cannot rest upon the wicked.

**13. I have also given thee that which thou hast not asked.** Those who first seek the kingdom of God will receive all smaller gifts (Matt. 6. 33). **Riches and honor.** (See next lesson.)

**14. If thou wilt walk.** Everything is conditional. All depends upon Solomon, as, in our times, upon the man himself. **As thy father David.** David's life was not always exemplary, but he always struggled hard to reach the goal. He no sooner sinned than he repented heartily, so that

the language here used is perfectly justifiable. **Then I will lengthen thy days.** Solomon broke faith with God and died when about sixty years of age. Josephus, however, says that he was eighty at the time of his death.

**15. It was a dream.** If God chose to communicate with Solomon through a dream the revelation was none the less real. **He came to Jerusalem.** He offered burnt offerings here, also in the tent before the ark of the covenant, as an expression of his gratitude for the glorious revelation at Gibeon. Here peace offerings were offered as well, for it was to be a season of national rejoicing, a great social event in which all his servants join. We may say that this second sacrifice is not mentioned in the Book of Chronicles. No reason can be assigned for this omission.

## Thoughts for Young People.

### The Purpose of Life.

**1. Every young man, like Solomon, early forms an ideal of life.** Often this is done only half-consciously, and many a youth and maiden would be puzzled to define their ideals. Nevertheless no human being lives without an ideal; and they have already bidden farewell to nobility of character who do not purpose and strive to attain it.

**2. The purpose of life should be chosen in the sight of God, and with direct reference to his will.** The God who made us made all things. If there are any laws in the natural or the spiritual world, he made those laws. We are parts of the universal system. How can we obtain success if we begin our activities out of harmony with God's law? For God's laws are not legislative acts; they are fundamental principles of life. He who disregards the divine will in forming his ideal is a discordant strain in the harp, a cause of failure to himself, of trouble to others, and of sorrow to God.

**3. Our purpose of life should be formed in view of our responsibilities.** The greatest responsibilities of our lives come to us without our choice. We have no more to do with them than we have to do with the selection of our height or the color of our hair. God gives them to us, and we should gladly take them from his hand as means to do his service. And all our ideals and purposes should be formed with these responsibilities in full view. Let us make the choice of our lives worthy of our station.

**4. The fundamental purpose of life should be to equip ourselves with that comprehensive wisdom which shall fit us for all details of lifework.**

**5. The realization of a noble purpose in life will depend upon the fidelity with which it is pursued.** (Verse 14.) Remember that the tortoise won the race against the hare.

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