

sacrifices, when the Lord spoke to him. **The Lord appeared.** Solomon's mind had been uplifted by the devotions of the day, and at night his thoughts were still fixed upon the subject of his prayer; and in his visions God met him. **In a dream.** This was but one of the many forms in which God made himself known before the full revelation of his will in the Scriptures. **Ask what I shall give.** God knew both Solomon's needs and his desires, but he gave him the privilege, as a test of his character, and as a lesson to others. 1. Our dreams by night are often the reflection of our thoughts by day. 2. Every young man, like Solomon, makes his own choice of an ideal in life.

6. Solomon said. He rests his petition upon the mercy which God had shown to his father, which now encourages him to ask like blessings. **Unto thy servant David.... great mercy.** To David God had given prosperity, success, wide conquests, and a settled empire. **Walked before thee in truth.** David had indeed served God with an earnest heart. He had sinned, but his crimes were such as no other oriental monarch would have considered worthy of notice, and his repentance had been deep and full. **In truth.** In the sincere obedience to truth as it was revealed to him. **This great kindness.... a son.** In contrast with Saul, whose house had been cut off, David's family was permitted to retain the throne. 3. God's rewards are in proportion to the fidelity of our service. 4. Children reap the benefits of their father's godliness.

7. Thou hast made thy servant king. Solomon rightly felt that his crown was God's gift, and not his by right. **Instead of David.** To succeed the greatest soldier, statesman, poet, and leader of the age was a task which might well make a young man tremble. **I am but a little child.** His precise age at this time was unknown. Josephus says it was fourteen; but modern writers regard it as about eighteen. **To go out or come in.** An expression referring to public life in presence of the people. 5. He is best qualified to rule who feels his own weakness and looks to God for help.

8. In the midst of thy people. Among the difficulties confronting Solomon were the control of his elder brothers and the court; the quelling of tribal jealousies between Ephraim and Judah; the subordination of a turbulent and independent people; the putting down of idolatry, which was still prevalent; the regulation of conquered States always ready for rebellion; and the worldly, secular ambitions of Israel as a people. Not all of these problems were successfully solved during his reign. **A great people that cannot be numbered.** A hyperbolic reference to the growth of Israel, which at that time numbered nearly seven millions.

9. Give therefore. Solomon's choice was wise, but not of the highest wisdom; it

was of this world, not of heaven; it was of human wisdom, not of divine. David would have said, "Give me to know God and have fellowship with him." **An understanding heart.** A mind endowed with quick and clear penetration, to see where right lay amid conflicting opinions. **To judge.** A judicial wisdom, to discriminate and decide wisely, and upon ground of right. Solomon sought not only keenness of perception, but righteousness of aim, as his own Proverbs show. 6. The only wise choice in life is a choice of the right in God's sight.

10. The speech pleased the Lord. Though it was a dream, it was no common dream, but a state of trance, in which the mind was in possession of all its powers, and lifted up to high spiritual perceptions. So it was Solomon's choice, though made while asleep.

11. God said. Perhaps by an inward voice to the spirit of the sleeper. **Thou hast asked this thing.** God was pleased because Solomon had not asked for himself, his own pleasure, or prosperity, or what a young man would be apt to choose. **Long life.** Ever regarded as a blessing, even in the troubles of our earthly state. **Riches for thyself.** Which most men now seek after as the greatest end of their being. **The life of thine enemies.** Such a choice as Salome made, demanding the head of John the Baptist. Solomon had enemies, as Jeroboam, Hadad, and Rezon, (1 Kings 11,) whose destruction he would naturally desire, as an oriental king. 7. Every young man's choice of a purpose in life is reviewed by the infinite wisdom of God.

12. I have done according. 8. Every man finds what he seeks for in life, in character, though not always in degree. **Given thee a wise.... heart.** God will grant every man's prayer for wisdom. James 1. 5. Solomon's wisdom came from God, yet was not gained without thought, study, and practice. **None like thee before thee.** In knowledge of all truth, in practical discernment, and in power to adapt his knowledge to the need of the hour, Solomon was the wisest of the ancients. **Neither after thee.** "In the knowledge of what was in man, and in the wisdom to direct men's goings, he was to be the wisest of all mere men."—*Speaker's Commentary.*

13. That which thou hast not asked. 9. Every man's chief aim in life carries with it other subordinate aims. 10. God gives to men always better than their prayers. **Riches and honour.** Thus the results of his wisdom in government were the prosperity of his realm and his own enrichment. Foreign trade, a long period of peace, a wise administration, made his reign an era of great wealth. Yet that wealth was one of the influences which corrupted the nation and led to its decline and downfall. The wealth was God's gift, the abuse of it was man's fault.

14. If thou wilt walk. This promise was conditioned upon Solomon's faithfulness to