

## 18.02 Solomon's Request for Wisdom (1 Kings 3:2–28; 4:1–28; 2 Chronicles 1:2–13)

✓ “Check” it out; opinion, inference, supposed conversation, or fact one can verify follows

Brackets [ . . . ] indicate a remark to the teacher that should not be read aloud, or they show answers to questions.

### Visuals and Tools:

- Pictures and other visuals found at the end of this lesson. Please give credit to the sources of pictures.
- Check “Activities” and “Handwork” found below for additional materials.

**Bible Time Tips and Terms to Teach:** Vocabulary words are enlarged for flashcards at the end of this lesson. Print, cut out, and glue to card stock, or just print on colorful cardstock.

- *wisdom*: knowing how to do or say the right thing; understanding what the will of the Lord is
- *high places*: hills upon which people worshiped their God or gods

### Scripture: (ESV)

1 Kings 3:2 The people were sacrificing at the high places, however, because no house had yet been built for the name of the LORD.

3 Solomon loved the LORD, walking in the statutes of David his father, only he sacrificed and made offerings at the high places. [2 Chronicles 1:2 Solomon spoke to all Israel, to the commanders of thousands and of hundreds, to the judges, and to all the leaders in all Israel, the heads of fathers' houses. 3 And Solomon, and all the assembly with him, went to the high place that was at Gibeon, for the tent of meeting of God, which Moses the servant of the LORD had made in the wilderness, was there. 4 (But David had brought up the ark of God from Kiriath-jearim to the place that David had prepared for it, for he had pitched a tent for it in Jerusalem.) 5 Moreover, the bronze altar that Bezalel the son of Uri, son of Hur, had made, was there before the tabernacle of the LORD. And Solomon and the assembly sought it out. ] 4 And the king went to Gibeon to sacrifice there, for that was the great high place. Solomon used to offer a thousand burnt offerings on that altar.

5 At Gibeon the LORD appeared to Solomon in a dream by night [in that night], and God said, “Ask what I shall give you.” 6 And Solomon said, “You have shown great and steadfast love to your servant David my father, because he walked before you in faithfulness, in righteousness, and in uprightness of heart toward you. And you have kept for him this great and steadfast love and have given him a son to sit on his throne this day. 7 And now, O LORD my God, you have made your servant king in place of David my father, although I am but a little child. I do not know how to go out or come in. 8 And your servant is in the midst of your people whom you have chosen, a great people, too many to be numbered or counted for multitude. 9 Give your servant therefore an understanding mind to govern your people, that I may discern between good and evil, for who is able to govern this your great people?”

10 It pleased the LORD that Solomon had asked this. 11 And God said to him, “Because you have asked this, and have not asked for yourself long life or riches or the life of your enemies, but have asked for yourself understanding to discern what is right, 12 behold, I now do according to your word. Behold, I give you a wise and discerning mind, so that none like you has been before you and none like you shall arise after you. 13 I give you also what you have not asked, both riches and honor, so that no other king shall compare with you, all your days. 14 And if you will walk in my ways, keeping my statutes and my commandments, as your father David walked, then I will lengthen your days.”

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

16 Then two prostitutes came to the king and stood before him. 17 The one woman said, “Oh, my lord, this woman and I live in the same house, and I gave birth to a child while she was in the house. 18 Then on the third day after I gave birth, this woman also gave birth. And we were alone. There was no one else with us in the

house; only we two were in the house. 19 And this woman's son died in the night, because she lay on him. 20 And she arose at midnight and took my son from beside me, while your servant slept, and laid him at her breast, and laid her dead son at my breast. 21 When I rose in the morning to nurse my child, behold, he was dead. But when I looked at him closely in the morning, behold, he was not the child that I had borne." 22 But the other woman said, "No, the living child is mine, and the dead child is yours." The first said, "No, the dead child is yours, and the living child is mine." Thus they spoke before the king.

23 Then the king said, "The one says, 'This is my son that is alive, and your son is dead'; and the other says, 'No; but your son is dead, and my son is the living one.'" 24 And the king said, "Bring me a sword." So a sword was brought before the king. 25 And the king said, "Divide the living child in two, and give half to the one and half to the other." 26 Then the woman whose son was alive said to the king, because her heart yearned for her son, "Oh, my lord, give her the living child, and by no means put him to death." But the other said, "He shall be neither mine nor yours; divide him." 27 Then the king answered and said, "Give the living child to the first woman, and by no means put him to death; she is his mother." 28 And all Israel heard of the judgment that the king had rendered, and they stood in awe of the king, because they perceived that the wisdom of God was in him to do justice.

1 Kings 4:20 Judah and Israel were as many as the sand by the sea. They ate and drank and were happy. 21 Solomon ruled over all the kingdoms from the Euphrates to the land of the Philistines and to the border of Egypt. They brought tribute and served Solomon all the days of his life.

22 Solomon's provision for one day was thirty cors of fine flour and sixty cors of meal, 23 ten fat oxen, and twenty pasture-fed cattle, a hundred sheep, besides deer, gazelles, roebucks, and fattened fowl. 24 For he had dominion over all the region west of the Euphrates from Tiphshah to Gaza, over all the kings west of the Euphrates. And he had peace on all sides around him. 25 And Judah and Israel lived in safety, from Dan even to Beersheba, every man under his vine and under his fig tree, all the days of Solomon. 26 Solomon also had 40,000 stalls of horses for his chariots, and 12,000 horsemen. 27 And those officers supplied provisions for King Solomon, and for all who came to King Solomon's table, each one in his month. They let nothing be lacking. 28 Barley also and straw for the horses and swift steeds they brought to the place where it was required, each according to his duty.

29 And God gave Solomon wisdom and understanding beyond measure, and breadth of mind like the sand on the seashore, 30 so that Solomon's wisdom surpassed the wisdom of all the people of the east and all the wisdom of Egypt. 31 For he was wiser than all other men, wiser than Ethan the Ezrahite, and Heman, Calcol, and Darda, the sons of Mahol, and his fame was in all the surrounding nations. 32 He also spoke 3,000 proverbs, and his songs were 1,005. 33 He spoke of trees, from the cedar that is in Lebanon to the hyssop that grows out of the wall. He spoke also of beasts, and of birds, and of reptiles, and of fish. 34 And people of all nations came to hear the wisdom of Solomon, and from all the kings of the earth, who had heard of his wisdom.

### **Introduction/Review:**

Last week we learned a new word that is the greatest of crimes against a country or its ruler. The word is \_\_\_\_\_. [Treason.] We learned the punishment for treason is \_\_\_\_\_. [Death.] Just as treason against a country deserves death, our treason against God deserves death. But God gave His Son to take our punishment if we believe in Jesus.

David knew Solomon would need to have wisdom to deal with those men who had committed treason and other crimes.

The word we need to learn this week is *wisdom*—knowing how to do or say the right thing. Wisdom is also understanding what the will of the Lord is.

What would *you* ask for if God said He would give you anything you asked for? [Allow time for answers.]

### **Story:**

*High places*

Remember, David had brought the ark of the covenant to a special tent in Jerusalem. However, the rest of the tabernacle and its furniture were all in Gibeon. Rather than just go to Gibeon in order to offer sacrifices, the people, including Solomon, offered sacrifices on hills, called high places. The greatest high place, however, was still Gibeon, where the tabernacle was.

God had said not to offer sacrifices in just any place but in the place which He would choose (Deuteronomy 12:13, 14). This command might have been confusing since the tabernacle was at Gibeon but the ark of the covenant was in Jerusalem.

The Bible tells us that Solomon loved the Lord, walking in the commands of his father David, except that he offered sacrifices in high places. Soon after he became king, Solomon called the captains, judges, and chiefs of families to meet at Gibeon, where Solomon offered a thousand sacrifices in worship to the Lord.

### ***God's offer***

That night as Solomon slept, the Lord appeared to Solomon in a dream and asked, "What shall I give to you?" God was saying, "Ask anything you want; it shall be given to you."

What do you think Solomon asked for? Was it riches, long life, honor, or power? No. This is how Solomon answered the Lord: "You were very kind to David, my father, who walked before you in truth and uprightness of heart. One kindness you gave was to let me, David's son, sit on his throne today. I'm just a little child."

Solomon *was* young—✓perhaps not yet 20 years old, about as old as \_\_\_\_\_ [name someone of this age whom the students know]. Solomon continued, "I hardly know how to go out or come in. Here I am in the middle of all this great number of people. Please, therefore, give me, Your servant, an understanding heart—wisdom—to judge Your people, that I may discern between good and bad. For who is able to judge this, Your so great a people?"

Did Solomon ask for riches? [No.] Long life? Honor? Power? [No.] That's what you or I might have prayed. What did he ask for? [An understanding heart; wisdom.]

Would God give it to him? Yes, He would. In fact, the Bible tells us God was pleased that Solomon asked for wisdom. God said, "Because you didn't ask for riches, long life, honor, and power for yourself but asked for wisdom, I will give you wisdom so that no one before you or after you will have so much wisdom." That's why we say that Solomon was the wisest man who ever lived. God continued, "I will also give you what you did not ask—riches, honor, and power—so that no other king will be like you as long as you live. And if you live by my commands, I will make you live longer."

Solomon woke up from his dream. Even though this promise was in a dream, it was real. God really did make the promise. Solomon got up, went back to Jerusalem, offered more offerings near the ark of the covenant, and made a feast for all his servants.

### ***Solomon's wisdom***

Here is an example of how God made Solomon wise: Two women with one baby came before King Solomon. One woman said, "My lord, we two women live in the same house. I had a baby, and three days later this woman had a baby. Her baby died in the night; so she got up at midnight, took my son from me, and laid her dead son by me.

"When I awoke in the morning, I thought my child was dead, but when I looked at the dead baby, I knew it was not my son."

The other woman argued, "No, the living son is mine, and the dead son is yours."

Whom do you think is the baby's mom? Are you sure? How can you tell which woman is telling the truth? You really can't, can you?

But God had given Solomon wisdom. Even so, we are shocked when we read Solomon's next words: "Bring me a sword. . . . Divide the living child in two, and give half to one and half to the other."

Now, that doesn't sound wise! What would happen to the baby? [It would die!]

But Solomon knew what he was doing, for the real mother cried out, "O, my lord, give this other woman the living child, but don't slay it!" Ah! The real mom loved the child enough to be willing to give it to the fake mom in order to save the baby's life.

"Give the child to this woman who pled for the living son's life; she is his mother," ordered King Solomon.

Now, when word got out about how wise Solomon was, all the people feared King Solomon, even though he was a young man. They saw that "the wisdom of God was in him, to do judgment."

### ***Solomon's kingdom***

One whole chapter of thirty-four verses, 1 Kings 4, is given over to descriptions of Solomon's extensive kingdom (all the kingdoms from the Euphrates River to the land of the Philistines and to the border of Egypt), the provision of food for one day (1350 gallons<sup>1</sup> of fine flour and 2700 gallons of meal, ten fat oxen, and twenty pasture-fed cattle, a hundred sheep, besides deer, gazelles, roebucks, and fattened fowl), and his many chariots and horsemen (40,000 stalls of horses for his chariots and 12,000 horsemen). By the way, having so many chariots and horses was something God had forbidden (Deuteronomy 17:16).

Solomon's wisdom is also described in 1 Kings 4:29–34. Listen. "And God gave Solomon wisdom and understanding beyond measure, and breadth of mind like the sand on the seashore, so that Solomon's wisdom surpassed the wisdom of all the people of the east and all the wisdom of Egypt. For he was wiser than all other men . . . and his fame was in all the surrounding nations. He also spoke 3,000 proverbs, and his songs were 1,005. He spoke of trees . . . of beasts, and of birds, and of reptiles, and of fish. And people of all nations came to hear the wisdom of Solomon. . . ."

God tells us to be wise, understanding what the will of the Lord is (Ephesians 5:17). How can we understand what the will of the Lord is? By studying God's Word. May we learn the will of God.

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<sup>1</sup>"The Rabbins estimated the cor at forty-five gallons, while Josephus estimated it at about eighty-seven" ([Cor Definition and Meaning - Bible Dictionary \(biblestudytools.com\)](http://www.biblestudytools.com/dictionary/cor/)). The smaller size is figured in the number of gallons in this lesson.

### **Lessons from This Lesson:**

- We see Jesus:  
"[C]oming to his hometown he taught them in their synagogue, so that they were astonished, and said, 'Where did this man get this wisdom and these mighty works?'" (Matthew 13:54). Jesus, being God Himself, had far more wisdom than even Solomon—infinite wisdom.

### **Activities:**

- Play dough: babies; sword
- Snack: something a baby might be able to eat, like avocado or apple sauce
- Sing "Solomon's Song" found at [Finale 2004a \(gardenofpraise.com\)](http://www.gardenofpraise.com/). Sing the first stanza and only the first half of the second. Save the last half of the second stanza for the lesson on the Queen of Sheba.
- Review questions: (Game: Print on card stock the letters and dashes, —, S, O, L, O, M, O, N, —, found below. For each correct answer, a student may place a letter or dash in a pocket chart. Rearrange the letters to spell the king's name correctly.)
  1. Because no house had yet been built for the name of the LORD, where were the people sacrificing? [On the high places.]
  2. Where was the main high place? [Gibeon.]
  3. Why was Gibeon the main high place? [That was where the tabernacle was; however, the ark of the

covenant was in Jerusalem.]

4. What was God's offer to Solomon in a dream? [To ask whatever he wanted. God would give it.]
5. For what did Solomon ask? [Wisdom to lead God's people.]
6. Because Solomon asked for wisdom and not other things, what did God promise to give him besides wisdom? [Riches and honor.]
7. What did two women who came before Solomon claim? [That a baby was theirs.]
8. How did Solomon determine who was the rightful mother of the baby? [When he threatened to divide the child with a sword, the real mother said the other woman could have the child.]
9. Who, besides Jesus, was the wisest man who ever lived? [Solomon.]

**Memory Verse[s]:** (KJV) A song sheet by Earl Martin for this verse may be found at [STB05SM \(mysteryministries.net\)](http://STB05SM.mysteryministries.net), page 12.

- Proverbs 1:7—The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge; but fools despise wisdom and instruction.

**Handwork:**

- Find the hidden pictures in the line drawing found below.

**wisdom**

**high places**





[FreeBibleimages :: The wisdom of Solomon :: Solomon asks God for wisdom \(1 Kings 1-10, 2 Chronicles 1-9\)](#)





[FreeBibleimages](#) :: [The wisdom of Solomon](#) :: Solomon asks God for wisdom (1 Kings 1-10, 2 Chronicles 1-9)





[FreeBibleimages](#) :: [The wisdom of Solomon](#) :: Solomon asks God for wisdom (1 Kings 1-10, 2 Chronicles 1-9)

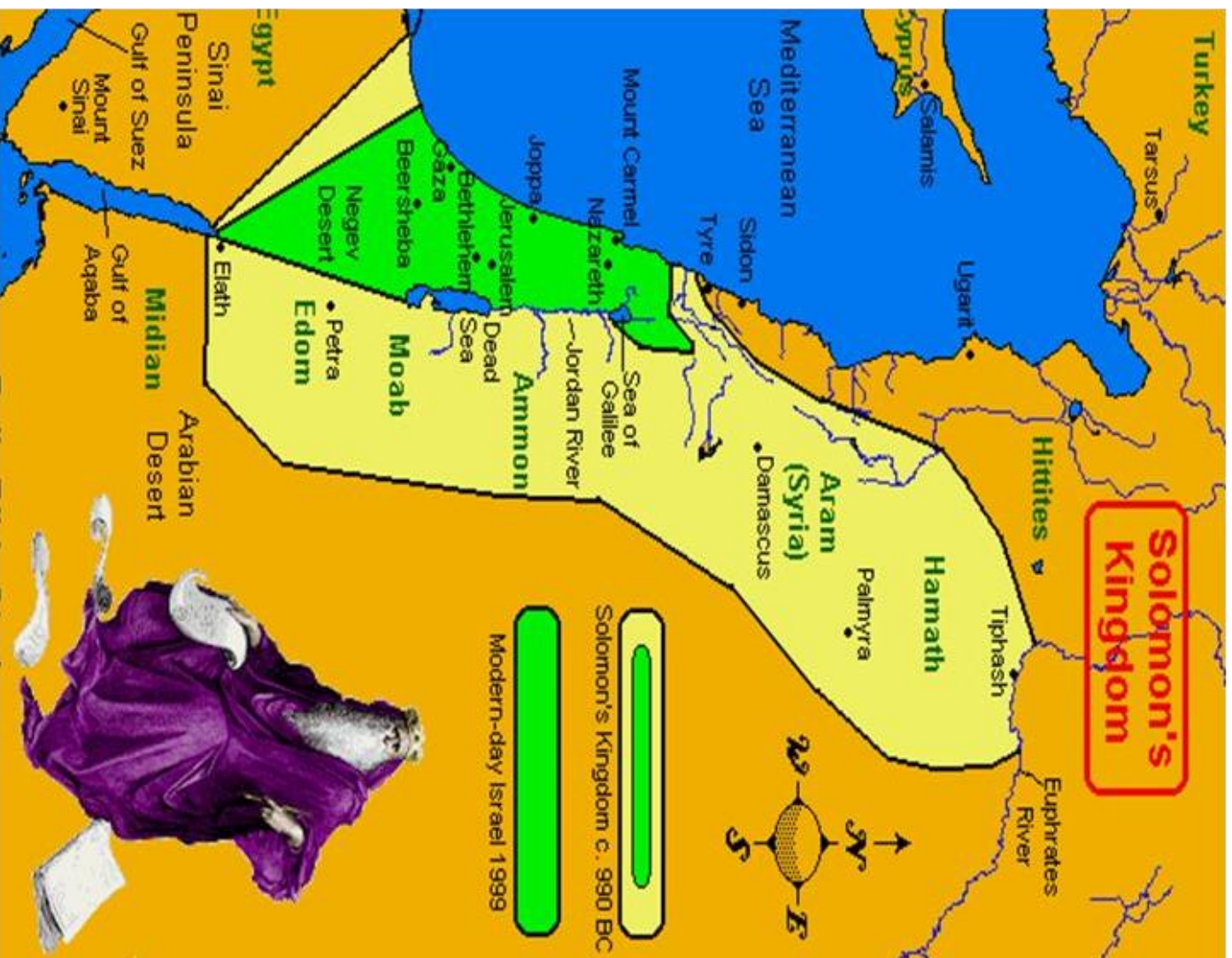


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# Solomon's Kingdom

Solomon was David's son



# **Solomon's Daily Needs**

**1350 gallons of fine flour**

**2700 gallons of meal**



**10 fat oxen**

**20 pasture-fed cattle**

**100 sheep**

**deer**



**gazelles**



**roebucks**

**fattened fowl**



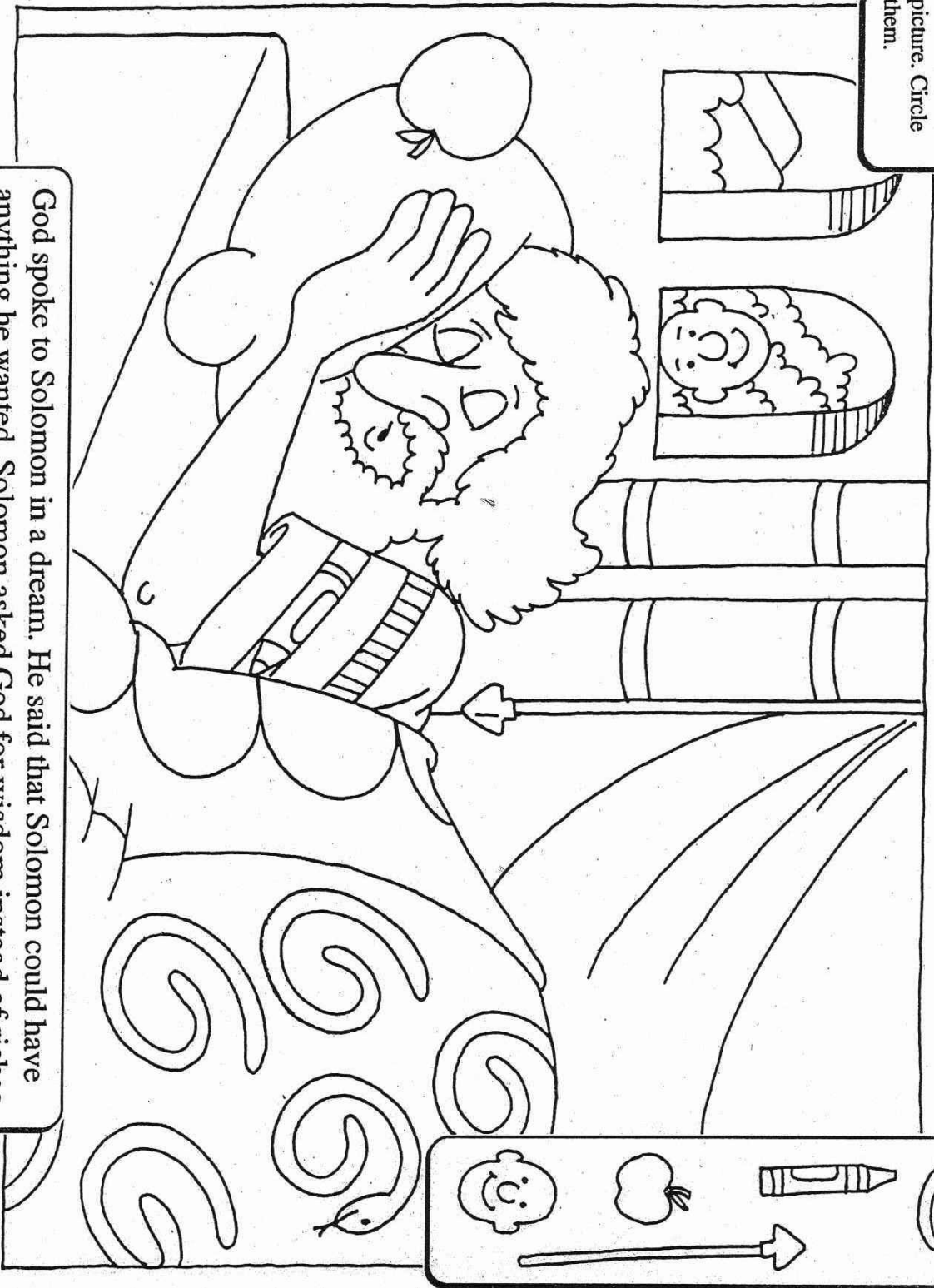
—SO

LOM

ON—

# Solomon's Wise Choice

Find the items in the box in the picture. Circle them.



God spoke to Solomon in a dream. He said that Solomon could have anything he wanted. Solomon asked God for wisdom instead of riches or fame. That was a wise choice!