

Solomon's Choice

Aaron watched King Solomon and the two women who stood before him. There was some disagreement between them, and they had brought the matter before the king to decide. King Solomon was supposed to be the wisest, king who had ever ruled Israel.

"What does it mean to be wise?" Aaron had asked his father.

"We will visit King Solomon's court today, son," his father had answered. "Today is the day people are allowed to bring their questions to the king."

Everyone in the surrounding towns knew King Solomon's story. His father had been King David. When David lay dying, he chose Solomon to be his successor, instead of one of Solomon's older brothers. These were the final words of David to Solomon, the new king of Israel: "Obey God's laws always. Keep the commandments given to Moses so that you will prosper in all that you do."

It had been said that the Lord had appeared to the new king in a dream. God had told Solomon to ask for anything he wanted, and He would give it to him.

"I don't think I could ever choose if given that chance," Aaron said when he heard the story. "There are so many things I would want to ask for. I'd like a bigger house, more good things to eat

and lots of toys for me and my brothers."

But King Solomon had not asked for great riches or for a long life. He hadn't asked for triumph over his enemies. Instead, he had chosen wisdom.

"I wish to be given a wise and understanding heart so that I can judge God's people fairly," Solomon had answered.

God was so pleased with Solomon's request that He had given him both wisdom and great riches!

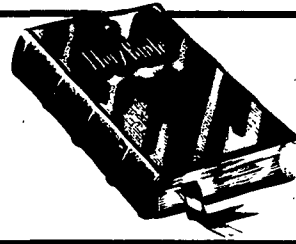
Aaron looked again at the two women who stood before King Solomon. He noticed now that there was a small baby, too. Something of great importance was about to be decided. The first woman spoke.

"Sir, this woman and I live in the same house. When my baby was just three days old, her own son was born. A short time later, her baby died."

"It was her baby that died!" the other woman interrupted. "When her baby died, she got up in the middle of the night and put her dead son beside me. She took my baby and tried to pretend it was hers."

"My baby lives! It was your baby that died," the first woman cried.

"I know what my own son looks like, and he lives!" insisted the second woman.



The Bible Corner Cindy Cottone

Aaron watched as King Solomon said nothing, but carefully observed the two women as they argued. It seemed like a long time before he finally spoke.

"Bring me a sword!" he commanded. A hush fell over the people who looked on, and Aaron wondered what would happen next.

"Since both of you claim to be the boy's mother, we will divide him in two parts and give half of the baby to each of you," King Solomon said.

Then one of the women cried out. "No, wait! Please stop," she said. "I would rather lose my own son to her than have him killed."

The other woman spoke up. "I suggest we divide the child between us. Then it will be neither yours nor mine."

"Give the baby to the woman who wants the child to live," King Solomon commanded. "She is the real mother."

Aaron hesitated a moment. Then he leaned over to his father and smiled.

"So that's what it means to be wise," he said.

For discussion:

- 1) Before King David died, what advice did he give to Solomon?
- 2) What gift did King Solomon choose to ask God for? Why? What gifts did God give him? Why?
- 3) How did King Solomon know which woman was the real mother of the baby?

For further reading:

- 1) King David's advice to his son, Solomon, is found in the Old Testament in 1 Kings 2:2-4.
- 2) King Solomon's dream is found in 1 Kings 3:5-15.
- 3) King Solomon's judgment of the two women is found in 1 Kings 3:16-28.
- 4) King Solomon was known as a very wise king. He built a great temple for the Ark of the Covenant. He also wrote songs and most of the Book of Proverbs. The Book of Proverbs was written as a type of guidebook to teach people how to live good lives. Over the next few weeks, we will be exploring lessons from the Book of Proverbs that we might apply to our own lives.

St. Bernard's Receives Grant

The Raskob Foundation for Catholic Activities has awarded St. Bernard's Institute \$10,000 for the integration of its library with the Ambrose Swasey Library of the Colgate Rochester Divinity School. Together, the two collections will comprise the sixth largest theological library in North America with 280,000 volumes.

The grant from the Wilmington, Del., foundation will finance only part of the \$46,000-dollar project begun in the summer of 1984. Other support has been received from the Ebsary Charitable Trust, the Rochester Regional Research Library Council, the Rochester Center for Theological Studies and the Van Buren N. Hansford Foundation. An additional \$23,000 will be sought during the coming

year to finish the integration project, which also signifies a permanent presence for St. Bernard's at the divinity school campus.

Charismatic Retreat

"Anointed with the Holy Spirit and Power..." will be offered at the Notre Dame Retreat House in Canandaigua Friday through Sunday, January 10-12. This retreat will be a time for praise and worship, a time to rediscover one's own giftedness and to share that giftedness in the Spirit.

Retreat team members are Father John Connor, C.Ss.R., Sister Mary Lynch, S.S.J., and Father Tim Keating, C.Ss.R. For reservations or more information, call (716)394-5700.

Pastoral Musicians Convene

"Hope and Beyond: The Developing Musician" will be the theme when the National Association of Pastoral Musicians gathers in Rochester for its regional convention. Musicians, liturgists and clergy from Maine to Pennsylvania will meet at the Genesee Plaza Holiday Inn July 14-17, 1986.

Speakers at this year's convention will include Don Campbell, Rev. Robert Hoyda, Elaine Rendler, David Hass and John Ferguson. Other planned highlights include a

gathering rite led by composer Leon Roberts, an organ recital by Dr. Joyce Schemanske and a music festival featuring folk groups from the region.

For more information on these events and the many other workshops planned, contact Hope and Beyond, National Association of Pastoral Musicians, 225 Sheridan Street N.W., Washington, D.C., 20011, (202)723-5800.

Benefit Supper and Auction

Organic wine, gourmet food and a service auction will be featured Sunday, January 26, at Jazzberry's, 713 Monroe Avenue, from 4-9 p.m. All proceeds will benefit the Politics of Food Task Force. For more information, call (716)244-7191.

Charismatic Masses Offered

Masses are offered every Monday, Wednesday and Friday at noon in the Catholic Charismatic Renewal Center, 34 Monica St., Rochester. Exceptions this month are Wednesday and Friday, Jan. 29 and 31.

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