

## Chapter Twenty One – Solomon’s Wisdom

Because of a conflict, one of David’s sons, Absalom, killed his brother and fled from home. In spite of the sadness he felt for his dead son, David forgave Absalom. He allowed him to come back to Jerusalem but Absalom could not live in the palace anymore. During the two years away from court, Absalom plotted a rebellion. Despite the fact that David forgave him for what he had done and let him return home, he tried to kill his forgiving father and take away his kingdom. When he had gathered enough men, he started a riot and drove his father out of the palace. However, he was not chosen as king in succession. While he was pursuing David, his head got caught in the branches of a tree. David’s men found him and killed him. David was very upset when he heard the news and wept. He was overcome with grief.

David was the king of Israel for forty years. Before he died, he appointed his son Solomon to succeed him and instructed him to follow God’s orders, obey all his laws and commands. When Solomon was a young king, he was faithful to God. One night God spoke to him in a dream, “Solomon, is there anything you would like me to give you?” He answered, “My Lord, you were always good to my father David. You let me succeed him as king so his kingdom would not end even after he died. I would like to have wisdom so that I can govern your people with justice and can differentiate between good and evil.”

Then God said, “I am very pleased with what you ask for and I will give wisdom to you. You did not ask for a long life, or riches, or victory over your enemies, but for wisdom to rule well. You will be filled with wisdom far more than all the kings who have ruled before you and all those who will rule after you. And what you did not ask for I will also grant you. You will have more riches, glory and honour than all the other kings.”

One day two women came before Solomon and asked him to judge their case. One of them said, “This woman and I were living in the same house. I had a baby and she also had one. One night she rolled over in her bed and killed her child. When she got up in the morning to feed it, she found that it was dead. So she took my child to replace her baby and put her dead baby in my bed. The next morning when I woke up to feed my baby, I found that it was dead. But when I looked at it carefully, I found that it was not my baby.”

But the other woman said, “That is not true. This is my baby and yours is dead.”

And the first argued back, “No. Your baby is dead and mine is alive.” And they continued to quarrel before the king.

Then Solomon said, “One says her baby is alive and the other says it is dead. Bring me a sword and let me cut the baby into two halves and each of you can have half the baby.”

When the real mother heard this she said, “No, do not kill it but let her have the whole baby.”

While the other said, “Cut the baby.”

Then Solomon said, “Give the baby to the first one for she is the real mother.”

All the people praised Solomon for his wise judgement.



*Solomon's wisdom*

**Questions:**

1. What kind of person was Absalom?
2. What can we learn from David about the virtue of forgiveness?
3. Why did Solomon ask God to give him wisdom?
4. Besides wisdom, what else did God give to Solomon?
5. Describe someone you think is or was a wise person.
6. Write a script on Solomon's judgement scene.