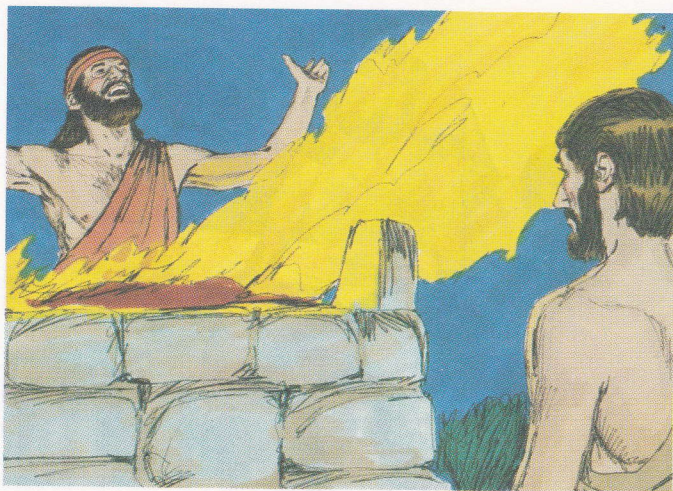
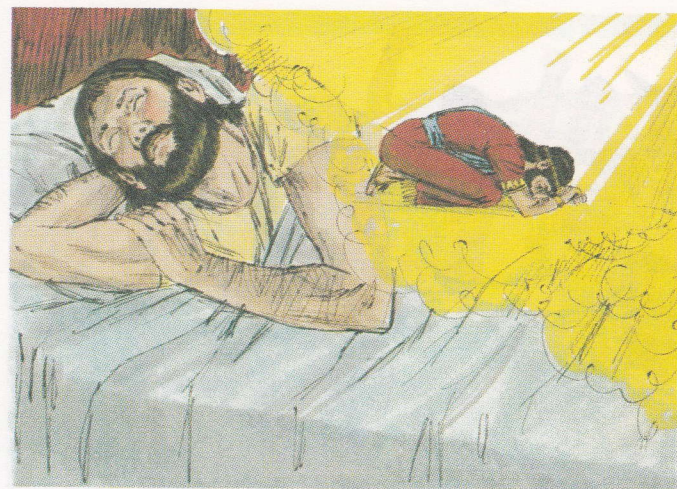


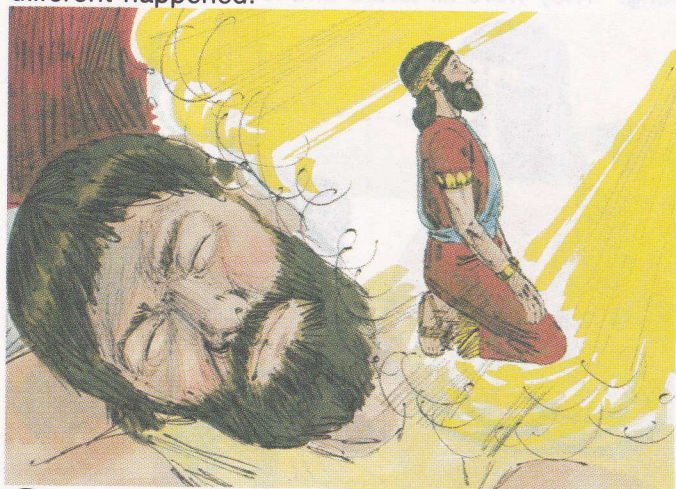
The Wisdom of Solomon



1 One day King Solomon went to Gibeon to offer sacrifices at the famous altar there. He had gone there many times before, but this time something different happened.



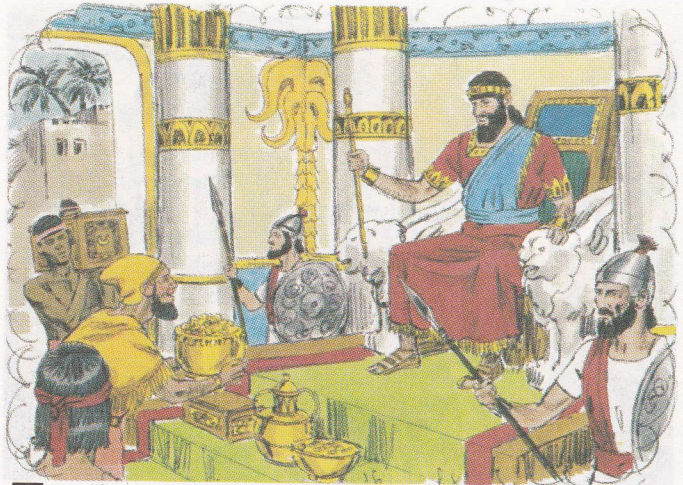
2 As Solomon slept that night, he had a dream. In the dream, the Lord appeared to him and asked, "Solomon, what would you like me to give you?"



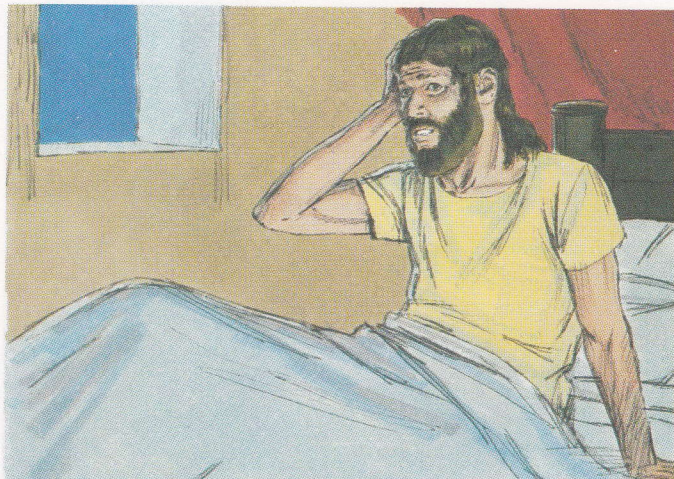
3 Solomon replied, "O Lord, you have made me king after my father, but I am still young. I do not know how to be a king. Give me the wisdom to rule your people in the right way."



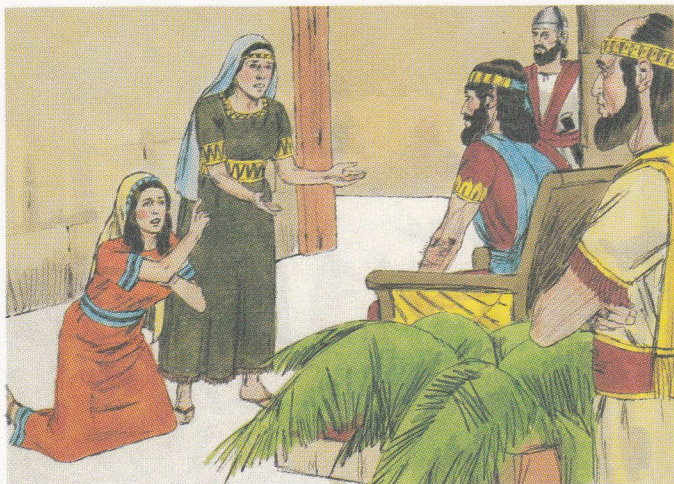
4 The Lord was pleased that Solomon's request was not a selfish one. "I will do what you have asked," God said. "I will give you more wisdom than anyone else in the world."



5 "I will also give you what you did not ask for: you will have more wealth and honor than any other king! And if you keep my laws, as your father David did, I will give you a long life."



6 When Solomon woke up, he realized that God had spoken to him through a dream. When he returned to Jerusalem, he offered sacrifices to God and gave a feast for his officials.



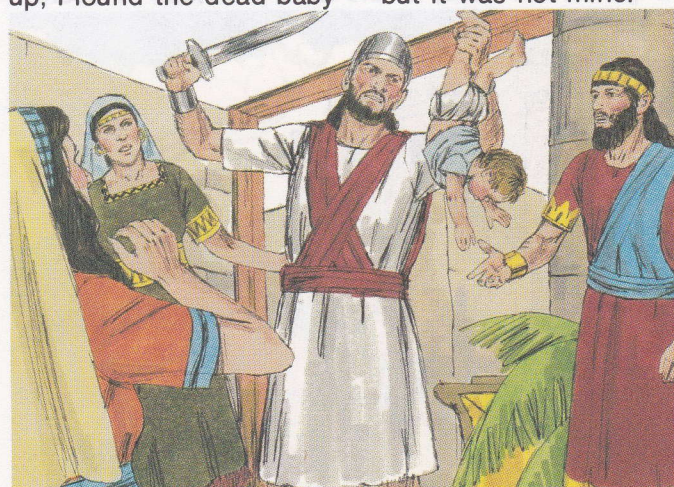
7 One day two women came to King Solomon. They wanted him to settle a dispute. One of them said, "Sir, this woman and I live in the same house, and both of us have given birth to baby boys."



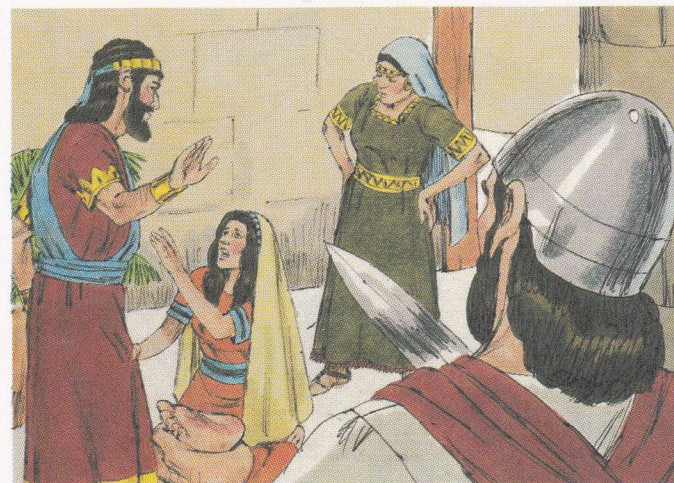
8 "During the night she accidentally killed her baby by rolling over on it. Then she took my baby and put the dead baby in my bed. When I woke up, I found the dead baby — but it was not mine!"



9 The other woman spoke up. "No!" she said. "The living child is mine! The dead one is yours!"



10 Then King Solomon sent his servant for a sword. When it was brought, he ordered the servant, "Cut the child in two and give each of the women half of it."



11 The mother cried, "Oh, no! Don't kill the child! Give it to her!" The other woman said, "Go ahead and cut it in two." Then Solomon said, "Stop! Give it to the first woman — she's the real mother."



12 The people of Israel were filled with respect for Solomon when they heard of his decision. They understood that God had given him special wisdom.