



## Rise and Fall, Part 1

Sunday, May 30, 2021

It is one thing to begin well; it is quite another to end well. King Solomon has a very impressive beginning to his reign and a dreadful end. We learn through Solomon that all who desire to follow Christ must have a heart that can discern what is right and what is wrong.

**The Biblical Record of His Life:** 1 Kings 1-12, 1 Chronicles 28-29, and 2 Chronicles 1-9.

### Setting the Scene (Facts about King Solomon)

- Solomon's name comes from the Hebrew word *shalom* which means "peace," and during his reign, the kingdom was at peace with its neighbors.<sup>1</sup>
- He was the son of King David and Bathsheba (2 Sam. 12:24)
- He was loved and favored by God (2 Sam. 12:24; 1 Chronicles 29:25; 2 Chronicles 1:1)
- He was 20 years old when he was made King. (No specific scripture, but most commentaries believe he was 20)
- He ruled Israel for 40 years and died around age 60. (2 Chronicles 9:30)
- He spoke 3,000 proverbs and wrote 1,005 songs (1 Kings 4:32)
- In our Bible, we have 2 Psalms written by Solomon: Ps. 72 & 127. He wrote the Book of Proverbs, Song of Songs, and Ecclesiastes.
- He was the wisest man of his time and in all of history (2 Chronicles 1:12; 9:22).

*The whole world sought audience with Solomon to hear the wisdom god had put in his heart. 1 Kings 10:24  
King Solomon was greater in riches and wisdom than all the other kings of the earth." 2 Chronicles 9:22*

- During his life, he was the richest King on the earth (1 Kings 10:23)

*The weight of gold that Solomon **received yearly** was 666 talents, not including the revenues brought in by merchants and traders. Also all the kings of Arabia and the governors of the land brought gold and silver to Solomon. 2 Chronicles 9:13-14*

**Solomon's annual income was:** (25 Metric tons each year)) A yearly income of 40 billion in gold and would have had a fortune of 2.2 Trillion Dollars.

- He had 1,400 chariots and 12,000 horses (1 Kings 10:26)
- He had 700 wives of royal birth and 300 concubines (1 Kings 11:3), which gave him alliances and trade agreements with all the powerful Kings around the land.
- God chose him to build the Temple (1 Chronicles 28:10).
- God manifested Himself to Solomon and the people of Israel in the Temple: (2 Chron. 5:13-14, 7:1-3)
- God spoke personally to Solomon twice in a vision (1 Kings 3:4-15 & 9:2-9).

*"The LORD highly exalted Solomon in the sight of all Israel and bestowed on him royal splendor such as no king over Israel ever had before." 1 Chronicles 29:25*

### What Solomon got right (The first 20 years as King)

#### 1. Solomon demonstrates mercy and justice. (1 Kings 1)

*Now Adonijah, whose mother was Haggith, (Haggith was one of David's wives) put himself forward and said, 'I will be King. 1 Kings 1:5*

*If he shows himself to be a worthy man, not a hair of his head will fall to the ground; but if evil is found in him, he will die." 1 Kings 1:52*

#### 2. Solomon honors his father. (1 Kings 2-3)

<sup>2</sup> *"I am going where everyone on earth must someday go, **Take courage and be a man.** <sup>3</sup> **Observe** the requirements of the LORD your God, and **follow all his ways.** Keep the decrees, commands, regulations, and laws written in the Law of Moses so that you **will be successful** in all you do and wherever you go. 1 Kings 2:2-3*

- Solomon's first two assignments: Take care of Joab & Shimei.

<sup>1</sup> Wiersbe, W. W. (2002). *Be responsible* (p. 24). Colorado Springs, CO: Victor.

### 3. Solomon humbles himself before the LORD. (1 Kings 3:3-15)

- He begins his reign with sincere love and passion for the Lord. (vs. 3)

<sup>3</sup> Solomon **loved the LORD** and **followed all the decrees** of his father, David, except that Solomon, too, offered sacrifices and burned incense at the local places of worship. 1 Kings 3:3

- He expressed gratitude (vs 4)

<sup>5</sup> That night, the LORD appeared to Solomon in a dream, and God said, "What do you want? Ask, and I will give it to you!" 1 Kings 3:5

Solomon heard the Lord say, "Ask! What shall I give you?" (v. 5, NKJV). The Lord's command and question were a revelation of God's grace as well as a test of Solomon's heart. (The word "ask" is found eight times in this passage.)

**What people ask for usually reveals what they really desire, and what they desire depends on how they envision their life's calling. Had Solomon been a warrior, he might have asked for victory over his enemies; but he saw himself as a youthful leader who desperately needed wisdom so he could adequately serve God's chosen people.** <sup>2</sup>

- He shows his heart of gratitude. (vs. 6)
- He admits his dependency on God. (vs. 7)

Solomon's two requests:

1. A discerning heart to govern God's people.
2. A discerning heart to distinguish between right and wrong.

- The heart is the command center of man.

[The heart]... "is essentially the whole man, with all his attributes, physical, intellectual, and psychological, of which the Hebrew thought and spoke, and the heart was conceived of as the governing centre for all of these. It is the heart which makes a man.... what he is and governs all his actions. Character, personality, will, mind are modern terms which all reflect something of the meaning of 'heart' in its biblical usage." -The New Bible Dictionary, 465.

- Discerning literally means "Hearing Heart."

"Solomon wanted a 'hearing heart.' True understanding comes from hearing what God has to say, and to the Old Testament Jew, 'hearing' meant 'obeying.'" -Warren Wiersbe: Be Responsible: 1 Kings, 30.

<sup>9</sup> And this is my prayer: that your love may abound more and more in **knowledge** and depth of **insight**, <sup>10</sup> so that you may be able to **discern** what is best and may be pure and blameless for the day of Christ, <sup>11</sup> filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ—to the glory and praise of God. Phillipians 1:9-11, NIV

αἰσθησις aisthēsis 1× perception, understanding<sup>3</sup>

<sup>5</sup> If you **need wisdom**, **ask** our **generous God**, and he will give it to you. He will not rebuke you for asking. James 1:5

### 4. Solomon builds the Temple of the Lord. (1 Kings 5-7; 2 Chronicles 3-8)

Now, my son, the Lord be with you, and may you have success and build the house of the Lord your God, as he said you would. May the Lord give you discretion and understanding when he puts you in command over Israel so that you may keep the law of the Lord your God. Then you will have success if you are careful to observe the decrees and laws that the Lord gave Moses for Israel. Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid or discouraged. 1 Chronicles 22:11-13

<sup>8</sup> Finishing is better than starting. Patience is better than pride. Ecclesiastes 7:8

<sup>33</sup> Seek the Kingdom of God above all else and live righteously, and he will give you everything you need. Matthew 6:33

### Next Steps

1. Do I bring glory to God in how am I living out the commandments of scripture?
2. Am I positioning myself to hear from God?
3. Is there a situation, call, or mission I am wrestling with God? Is it time to take a step of faith?

Solomon started so strong spiritually, but what matters is whether you make it to the finish. Will you choose to have a heart for God?

<sup>2</sup> Wiersbe, W. W. (2002). Be responsible (p. 28). Colorado Springs, CO: Victor.

<sup>3</sup> Mounce, W. D. (2006). Mounce's Complete Expository Dictionary of Old & New Testament Words (p. 1074). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.