

One of the most intriguing men in the Bible, and in world history, is Solomon. Perhaps no king has ever achieved the fame and wealth that Solomon did, and certainly no king has ever been as wise as Solomon. Solomon is unique among men because God gave him a unique portion of wisdom. The truth is, however, Solomon possessed a measure of wisdom before this great gift! First Kings 3:3 says that, “*Solomon loved the Lord, walking in the statutes of David his father...*” Solomon was off to a good start by heeding David’s counsel and serving the Lord. God appeared to Solomon in a dream and offered, “*Ask what I shall give you.*” (1 Kgs. 3:5). Solomon could have chosen many things, but he asked for wisdom. It takes a measure of wisdom and self-control to ask for such a thing. What we learn is this: wisdom begets wisdom. We may not have been given special wisdom like Solomon, but we can still pursue and obtain wisdom. Solomon was on the path to a degree of wisdom already. When one loves and pursues wisdom, more wisdom is always to be found. As Solomon says, “*The beginning of wisdom is this: Get wisdom, and whatever you get, get insight*” (Pro. 4:7).

We also learn that special wisdom isn’t a sure-fire defense against folly. For all his wisdom, Solomon made some foolish mistakes, particularly in the women he married. Deuteronomy 17:17 says of kings, “*he shall not acquire many wives for himself, lest his heart turn away...*” What did Solomon do? Exactly what God’s law said not to do. He acquired many wives from many lands, and they turned away his heart (1 Kgs. 11:3). And herein is another lesson: it does not matter how smart or wise we are if we won’t listen to God’s Word. God has not bestowed special wisdom on us, but He has given us His Word. If we seek true wisdom, all we need is to humbly read and obey, then we can avoid folly and get wisdom!

Questions:

- Which of David’s sons attempted to take control of the throne before Solomon was named king? _____
- What city was Solomon in when the Lord appeared to him in a dream?

- How many people were drafted into various types of service for building the temple?

- How long did it take for Solomon to build the temple? _____
- “Lord God of _____, there is no _____ in heaven _____ or on _____ below like You, who keep your _____ and mercy with Your _____ who walk before You with all their _____.” (NKJV)
- Solomon stated that he built a dwelling place for the Lord, but did Solomon believe or conclude that God could be housed in a physical temple? (cf. 1 Kgs. 8:27).
- What queen visited Solomon to test him with hard questions?

- During Solomon’s reign, silver was as common as _____ in Israel.
- Solomon had _____ wives and _____ concubines.
- Who did God promise to give ten tribes of Israel to as a result of Solomon’s sin?

“That You May Grow Thereby...”

A weekly Bible reading plan



1 Kings 1-11

The Reign of Solomon

Overview

We return to the Old Testament this week, and pick up once more the history of the Jewish people. David had ruled for 40 years, but what would become of the nation when he was gone? With Solomon on the throne, the nation grew even greater. Wealth was abundant, peace was enjoyed, and Israel became one of the greatest nations that has ever existed. Solomon ruled in wisdom, and during his reign the Temple was constructed—perhaps one of the greatest buildings ever erected. Solomon’s fame was known throughout the world, and visitors came from far and wide to meet Solomon and marvel at his kingdom. All this was possible, of course, because God had granted wisdom to Solomon, and because the nation was loyal to God. Sadly, even the wisest of men can make foolish mistakes. Solomon disobediently married many foreign women, and his heart was turned away from God. By the end of his rule, the once loyal Solomon was partaking in idolatry. Solomon’s sins paved the way for rebellion that would change the landscape of Israel’s history forever!

Suggested Reading Schedule

- Monday: 1 Kings 1-2
- Tuesday: 1 Kings 3-5
- Wednesday: 1 Kings 6-7
- Thursday: 1 Kings 8-9
- Friday: 1 Kings 10-11

Outline

First Kings is divided into two primary sections: the reign of Solomon and the beginning of the divided kingdom.

The Reign of Solomon (1-11)

- Solomon’s Rise to Power (1-2)
- Solomon’s Accomplishments (3-10)
- Solomon’s Folly (11)

The Divided Kingdom (12-22)

- Enmity Between Judah & Israel (12-16)
- Peace Between Judah & Israel (17-22)



Deuteronomy & Kings

The Law was to be the foundation of Israelite life. It was to be known, read, and internalized. It’s clear that 1st and 2nd Kings are more than mere historical records—they are historical works written to highlight theological truths. God had promised to bless Israel if the people were faithful, but He also promised to punish Israel if she rebelled (cf. Deut. 28). Once clear hearkening to Deuteronomy can be found in David’s final words to Solomon (1 Kgs. 2:1-4). Consider how many of David’s words can be traced back to Deuteronomy:

- “*Keep the charge of the Lord your God*” (Deut. 11:1)
- “*Walking in his ways...*” (Deut. 8:6)
- “*Keeping his statutes...commandments...*” (Deut. 6:2)
- “*That you may prosper in all that you do*” (Deut. 29:9)
- “*That the Lord may establish his word he spoke concerning me...*” (Deut. 9:5)
- “*...with all their heart and with all their soul*” (Deut. 4:9)

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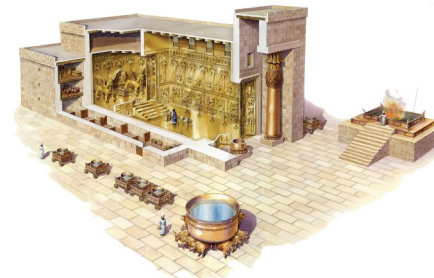
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