

Greater than Solomon

2 Chronicles 1-9

The King is Coming (2 Chronicles)

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livinghopechurch.net

“There is more mercy in Christ than sin in us.”

~ **Richard Sibbes**

Open your Bible to **2 Chronicles**. We are beginning a new 14 message series in the book of 2 Chronicles entitled “The King is Coming.” This morning we are looking at a message entitled: “Someone Greater than Solomon.”

Proposition: We should never look to anyone outside of Jesus to save us.

I Couldn't Wait

It seems all my life I've been waiting for the next big thing.

- Every year I couldn't wait for Christmas.
- When I was 11 I couldn't wait to turn 12.
- When I was in high school I couldn't wait to go to college.
- When I met Jill, I couldn't wait to get married.
- After we got married, I couldn't wait to have children.

After a while, I finally realized I don't need to wait for the next big thing! I am complete in Christ! I don't need Christmas or college or marriage to be my savior. I already have a savior. That's what the book of 2 Chronicles is all about.

We are All Looking for a Savior

We are all looking for a savior. We may look to a job that can deliver the money. We may look for a spouse that can give us companionship and romance. We may look for that loyal friend that will never let us down. But at the end of the day, as we find out in the book of 2 Chronicles, everyone and everything lets us down. There is only one Savior. In the Old Testament, His name is YHWH. He is more fully revealed in the New Testament at the Lord Jesus Christ.

2 Chronicles is written to Israelites returning from exile. 2 Chronicles is a reminder that God is the ultimate Savior all kings and princes fail. Only Messiah's kingdom cannot fail.

Life of Solomon

Today we look at the life of Solomon. Here was a man who had everything: wisdom, riches, romance, and a great kingdom. People looked to him as a king and a deliverer. As we will find out today, we must not put our hope in kings or princes or presidents. Our hope is in the Lord God! We have no king or president but Jesus!

Now knowing Jesus should make us all good citizens. But let's understand after this election we had (or any election for that matter) that there is no hope in mankind. No government can save us outside the government of Jesus Christ.

Jeremiah 17:5, 7-8, “Cursed is the man who trusts in man and makes flesh his strength, whose heart turns away from the Lord... 7 “Blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord, whose trust is the Lord. 8 He is like a tree planted by water, that sends out its roots by the stream.”

Nine chapters are devoted to Solomon (ca. 961–922 B.C.), but of these the major portion is given to the building of the temple (2:1–8:16).¹

I. The Greater **Kingdom**, 2 Sam 12:24ff; 2 Chr 1:1; 9:13-28.

SOLOMON'S KINGDOM FOUNDED ON GOD'S GRACE & MERCY

Solomon has a greater kingdom than David, but you dear saints of God, have a greater kingdom than Solomon's. I'll show that to you in a moment, but let's first consider the birth of this great king: Solomon.

Solomon's Birth

2 Samuel 12:24-25, “Then David comforted his wife, Bathsheba, and went in to her and lay with her, and she bore a son, and he called his name Solomon. And **the Lord loved him** ²⁵ and sent a message by Nathan the prophet. So he called his name Jedidiah, because of the Lord.”

An Adulterous, Murderous Father

When we speak of Solomon's greatness, we have to first consider the circumstances of his birth. He is the child of his father's adulterous heart. David's heart strayed from the Lord, and he committed adultery with Bathsheba, who is Solomon's mother.

A Mother who was a Victim

David killed Uriah the Hittite. Bathsheba was also likely a Hittite woman. What does God do with this mess? He shows **mercy**! Realize that God looks down on this mess, and He redeems. God loves to redeem people out of messes. That's what God's kingdom is all about. Remember that Solomon is in the lineage of Jesus, and his Hittite mother is in the very genealogy of Jesus.

A God Who Blesses the Messes

Solomon's greatness comes out of God's **mercy**. His nickname is **Jedidiah**:

- **YADAD**: “Beloved”
- **YHWH**: “by the LORD”

Loved by the Lord. We have a God who blesses the messes of our lives! Despite David's lawlessness, God blesses Solomon, and gives him a nickname: Beloved of the Lord.

Why does God bless David's son Solomon with the Golden Age of Israel's Kingdom? Because Solomon's God is a merciful God.

¹ Thompson, J. A. (1994). *1, 2 Chronicles* (Vol. 9, p. 201). Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers.

You are Loved by the Lord!

And do you know that you are also loved by YHWH? You are given the wisdom and riches and glory of Christ. You are “heirs of God and joint-heirs of Christ.” God has shown you love, not based on your mess, but based on His mercy. Never forget that. You are sovereignly and unconditionally loved by God based on His own heart. Don’t ever forget that.

A Young Man Who Loved the Lord

Thankfully, we see that Solomon became a young man who loved God. The Bible describes him as a man after God’s own heart, just like his father David: “Solomon loved the LORD, walking in the statutes of David his father” (1 Kings 3:3).

This is virtually the highest praise that any person could ever receive. In fact, Solomon is the only man in the entire Bible who is said to have “loved the Lord,” in so many words. His heart was full of holy affections for the living God. He adored the divine being, responding to God emotionally. He felt a deep spiritual longing in his soul, a passionate yearning for a closer relationship to God.²

SOLOMON’S KINGDOM FOUNDED ON GOD’S GREATNESS

We are going to see that it is the Lord that makes Solomon great. God grants Solomon greatness and wisdom and riches and mercy. In spite of all that, we all know Solomon fails miserably. You see, Solomon’s kingdom is not the ultimate kingdom. All the kingdom’s of men, even Solomon’s will come to nothing. Only the Kingdom of Jesus, God’s Kingdom cannot fail.

2 Chron 1:1, “Solomon the son of David established himself in his kingdom, and the Lord his God was with him and made him exceedingly great.”

It is God’s mercy that put the kingdom firmly in Solomon’s hands. This is God’s act. The LORD his God was with him and made him exceedingly great. God’s presence and faithfulness is one of Chronicles’ enduring themes.³

You see, the book of 2 Chronicles is written more than 70 years after the captivity of Judah in Babylon. The books of 1 and 2nd Chronicles are written to bring hope to the people of Israel who were working hard to get re-established in the Promised Land.

Some of the people remember what life was like before captivity when they were children. They are old now.

SOLOMON’S KINGDOM FOUNDED ON GOD’S GENEROSITY

2 Chron 9:13-14, “Now the weight of gold that came to Solomon in one year was 666 talents of gold [\$800 million],¹⁴ besides that which the explorers and merchants brought. And all the kings of Arabia and the governors of the land brought gold and silver to Solomon.”

Solomon’s Wealth & Trade

Look at the opulence and wealth of Solomon’s kingdom:

2 Chron 9:17-22, “The king also made a great ivory throne and overlaid it with pure gold.¹⁸ The throne had six steps and a footstool of gold, which were attached to the throne, and on each side of the seat were armrests and two lions standing beside the armrests,¹⁹ while twelve lions stood there, one on each end of a step on the six steps. Nothing like it was ever made for any kingdom.²⁰ All King Solomon’s drinking vessels were of gold, and all the vessels of the House of

² Ryken, P. G. (2011). *1 Kings*. (R. D. Phillips, I. M. Duguid, & P. G. Ryken, Eds.) (p. 71). Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Publishing.

³ Hicks, J. M. (2001). *1 & 2 Chronicles* (p. 260). Joplin, MO: College Press Pub. Co.

the Forest of Lebanon were of pure gold. Silver was not considered as anything in the days of Solomon. ²¹ For the king's ships went to Tarshish with the servants of Hiram. Once every three years the ships of Tarshish used to come bringing gold, silver, ivory, apes, and peacocks.

²² Thus King Solomon excelled all the kings of the earth in riches and in wisdom. ²³ And all the kings of the earth sought the presence of Solomon to hear his wisdom, which God had put into his mind.”

The Expansive Trade Network

Solomon’s kingdom was so successful because of the international trade routes that went right through Israel. **2 Chron 9:26**, “And he [Solomon] ruled over all the kings from the Euphrates to the land of the Philistines and to the border of Egypt.”

You see Israel was between Egypt and the kings of the north in Tyre and Syria and beyond.

This **network of trade international routes** blanketed the eastern seaboard of Israel, and Solomon became one of **the greatest middlemen of the ancient world.**

The riches of southern Egypt and Africa all the way to northern Mesopotamia flowed through Israel, which was right in the middle of everything.

The Expanse of Solomon’s Kingdom: Fulfilling Prophecy

Solomon’s kingdom spanned from the edge of Egypt (at the Sinai Peninsula), all the way up to the Euphrates River. Solomon fulfilled God’s covenant to Abraham in **Genesis 15:18** that “to your descendants I have given this land, from the river of Egypt as far as the great river, the river Euphrates.”⁴ – Just as God said!

How He Loves You!

Luke 12:27-28, “Consider the lilies, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin, yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. ²⁸ But if God so clothes the grass, which is alive in the field today, and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, how much more will he clothe you, O you of little faith!”

YOU HAVE A GREATER KINGDOM THAN SOLOMON

Solomon’s Kingdom is a Shadow of Christ’s Kingdom

Matthew 11:11 says that the least in the New Testament Kingdom is “greater than John the Baptist,” and we might say greater than Solomon or any of the OT kings or prophets.

Solomon’s kingdom, his temple, and all the Old Testament ceremonies and offices were a mere “shadow” of something greater to come (Heb. 10:1)

Solomon’s Kingdom Does Not Last

Solomon’s Kingdom would fail in just one generation. His son Rehoboam would split the kingdom and lose the ten northern tribes.

But Jesus’ kingdom cannot fail. If you are part of Jesus’ kingdom, then you know that “His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom” (Dan 4:3; cf. Psa 145:13).

⁴ Wright, P. H. (2012). *Rose Then and Now Bible Map Atlas with Biblical Background and Culture* (p. 64). Torrance, CA: Rose Publishing.

A Greater than Solomon is Here

Mt 12:42, Jesus said the Queen of Sheba (modern day Yemen) “came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon, and behold, something greater than Solomon is here.”

Do you know Him? Are you seeking Him and His kingdom above all else?

Only One Kingdom can Save Us

It is at this time in our nation’s history that we need to remember there is never any lasting political salvation. **Kings and presidents come and go.** Politicians make promises they cannot keep. There is only one government that will deliver. All others fail to deliver the promises.

We must not look to a government or political system to save us. A president is just a sinner in need of Christ.

We must look to the only government that is perfect. And the one that rules in that Kingdom is the King of all kings and the Lord of all Lords. Every knee shall bow to Him and every tongue will confess that He is Lord and absolute sovereign. Only when He comes will there be not only lasting peace, but everlasting peace! **Only Jesus’ Kingdom can deliver on all its promises!**

II. The Greater **Wisdom**, 2 Chr 1:7-13; 9:1-12.

Three Wishes

The 2005 television reality show *Three Wishes* asked that question in small towns across America. In each heartwarming episode the producers made wishes come true, choosing three people to receive the one thing they wanted more than anything else in life. The application said, “We are looking for emotional stories of people in need. We want to help deserving people—people who always help others, but never think of themselves.” Then it asked the big question: “If you had one wish in the world and could ask for absolutely anything from the heart, what would it be?”

The television producers said that money was no object, which may explain why the show was canceled after only one season: making wishes come true can get very expensive! But what if your biggest wish really could come true? And what if the person asking what you wanted had infinite resources? This was the opportunity that Almighty God gave to King Solomon: “Ask what I shall give you.”⁵

1 Kings 4:30, “Solomon’s wisdom surpassed the wisdom of all the people of the east and all the wisdom of Egypt.” How did this happen?

An Echo of Christ in Psalm 2

2 Chron 1:7, “In that night God appeared to Solomon, and said to him, “Ask what I shall give you.”” Solomon had a visitation from YHWH Himself.

The divine invitation “*Ask! What shall I give you?*” has a flavor associated with the Davidic dynasty. In the royal **Psalm 2** it occurs in the context of universal rule: “Ask of me, and I will make the nations your heritage, and the ends of the earth your possession.” (**Psa 2:8**).⁶

Solomon is a type of Christ, but as we see, he is a very imperfect image. He falls short in a thousand ways. Nevertheless, God asks Solomon, what do you want? Ask, and it shall be given

⁵ Ryken, P. G. (2011). *1 Kings*. (R. D. Phillips, I. M. Duguid, & P. G. Ryken, Eds.) (pp. 70–71). Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Publishing.

⁶ Allen, L., & Ogilvie, L. J. (1987). *1, 2 Chronicles* (Vol. 10, p. 185). Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson Inc.

you!

WISDOM COMES THROUGH WORSHIP

Don't miss something very important here. Wisdom comes through worship. Solomon was at Gibeon because the ark of the covenant was there. He was devoted in His worship to the true and living God, YHWH. It was while he was worshipping that he gained great wisdom.

2 Chron 1:8-13, “Solomon said to God, “You have shown great and steadfast love to David my father, and have made me king in his place. ⁹O Lord God, let your word to David my father be now fulfilled, for you have made me king over a people as numerous as the dust of the earth. ¹⁰Give me now wisdom and knowledge to go out and come in before this people, for who can govern this people of yours, which is so great?”

¹¹God answered Solomon, “Because this was in your heart, and you have not asked for possessions, wealth, honor, or the life of those who hate you, and have not even asked for long life, but have asked for wisdom and knowledge for yourself that you may govern my people over whom I have made you king, ¹²wisdom and knowledge are granted to you. I will also give you riches, possessions, and honor, such as none of the kings had who were before you, and none after you shall have the like.”¹³ So Solomon came from the high place at Gibeon, from before the tent of meeting, to Jerusalem. And he reigned over Israel.”

Instead of “wealth, riches or honor,” Solomon entreats the Lord for wisdom and knowledge to govern God's people effectively (1:11).⁷ And he does this well.

Settling Disputes: Two Women Yield to Solomon's Wisdom

We read of Solomon's wisdom in settling disputes between his people. Remember the way Solomon settled the dispute between two feuding single mothers who lived in the same home. He said to “cut the child in half” and the true mother let the imposter have the baby. And instead wise King Solomon awarded the baby to its true mother (1 Kings 3:16-28).

Queen of Sheba Admires Solomon's Wisdom

And the most famous account of his wisdom is when the Queen of the South, the Queen of Sheba came to meet Solomon in **2 Chron 9:1-12**, “Now when the queen of Sheba heard of the fame of Solomon, she came to Jerusalem to test him with hard questions, having a very great retinue and camels bearing spices and very much gold and precious stones. And when she came to Solomon, she told him all that was on her mind. ²And Solomon answered all her questions. There was nothing hidden from Solomon that he could not explain to her. ³And when the queen of Sheba had seen the wisdom of Solomon, the house that he had built, ⁴the food of his table, the seating of his officials, and the attendance of his servants, and their clothing, his cupbearers, and their clothing, and his burnt offerings that he offered at the house of the Lord, there was no more breath in her.

⁵And she said to the king, “The report was true that I heard in my own land of your words and of your wisdom, ⁶but I did not believe the reports until I came and my own eyes had seen it. And behold, half the greatness of your wisdom was not told me; you surpass the report that I heard. ⁷Happy are your wives! Happy are these your servants, who continually stand before you and hear your wisdom!⁸ Blessed be the Lord your God, who has delighted in you and set you on his throne as king for the Lord your God! Because your God loved Israel and would establish them forever, he has made you king over them, that you may execute justice and righteousness.” ⁹Then

⁷ Hill, A. E. (2003). *1 & 2 Chronicles* (p. 376). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.

she gave the king 120 talents of gold, and a very great quantity of spices, and precious stones. There were no spices such as those that the queen of Sheba gave to King Solomon.

¹⁰ Moreover, the servants of Hiram and the servants of Solomon, who brought gold from Ophir, brought algum wood and precious stones. ¹¹ And the king made from the algum wood supports for the house of the Lord and for the king's house, lyres also and harps for the singers. There never was seen the like of them before in the land of Judah.

¹² And King Solomon gave to the queen of Sheba all that she desired, whatever she asked besides what she had brought to the king. So she turned and went back to her own land with her servants."

Matthew 12:42, "The queen of the South will rise up at the judgment with this generation and condemn it, for she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon, and behold, something greater than Solomon is here."

What great wisdom Solomon had, but if you are in Christ, you have greater wisdom!

YOU HAVE A GREATER WISDOM THAN SOLOMON

The Key to Solomon's Wisdom and Yours

The key to Solomon's wisdom was his worship and walk with God. Twice the Lord appeared to Solomon.

2 Chron 1:6-7, "Solomon went up there to the bronze altar before the Lord, which was at the tent of meeting, and offered a thousand burnt offerings on it. ⁷ In that night **God appeared to Solomon**, and said to him, "Ask what I shall give you." And Solomon asked for wisdom. The greatest wisdom is to know the Lord!

Proverbs 9:10, "The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom, And the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding."

- Solomon wrote the **Proverbs**.
- Many biblical historians believe he took the oral history of **Job** and put it in writing.
- Solomon also wrote **Ecclesiastes** and the **Song of Solomon**.

These are all literary masterpieces of great wisdom.

What good is Wisdom without the Lord?

Yet what good is all this knowledge without the true wisdom of fearing the Lord? Solomon was so wise, but all the wisdom is lost when he stops fearing the Lord. Remember again **Proverbs 9:10**, "The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom, And the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding."

Bless the Lord if you know Christ, for all who are born again are wiser than Solomon.

- **1 Corinthians 2:12-14**, "Now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might understand the things freely given us by God. ¹³ And we impart this in words not taught by human wisdom but taught by the Spirit, interpreting spiritual truths to those who are spiritual. ¹⁴ The natural person does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him, and he is not able to understand them because they are spiritually discerned."

You Have a Greater Wisdom than Even Solomon

If you have Christ, you have all wisdom! You have the mind of Christ! You have Christ who is the **wisdom** and the **power** of God. Man's greatest wisdom is foolishness compared to the

foolishness of God!

The simplest Christian has infinitely more wisdom than the wisest worldly sage without Christ.

III. The Greater **Temple**, 2 Chr 2-8

2 Chron 2:1, “Now Solomon purposed to build a temple for the name of the Lord, and a royal palace for himself.”

Solomon has a greater place of worship than his father David, but you dear saints of God, have a greater temple than Solomon’s. The focal point of Solomon’s kingdom was the city of Jerusalem, where two magnificent new buildings were constructed. These were the royal palace and the temple.⁸

THE LOCATION OF THE TEMPLE CENTRALIZING WORSHIP IN JERUSALEM

The background of the story is that Jerusalem is not yet the main center of Israelite worship; only when the temple is built under Solomon will it become so.

David prepares the way for Solomon to make **Jerusalem the capital city** by bringing the **covenant chest** there, erecting a **tent** for it, and arranging for **offerings** to be made there. But God’s “real” dwelling is the Tent of Meeting that goes back to the wilderness days. By its nature it is movable and has been located at different places, and at the start of Solomon’s reign, it is at Gibeon, just north of Jerusalem.⁹

THE BUILDING OF THE TEMPLE

We are told in **1 Kings 6:7** that when the great temple of Solomon was constructed, “it was with stone prepared at the quarry, so that neither hammer nor axe nor any tool of iron was heard in the house while it was being built.” To my knowledge, no building in history was ever built in this way. Its construction was almost silent, so holy was the work. Silently, silently, the stones were moved and added and the building rose.”¹⁰ No noise. No hammers. So it is with the Spirit of God.

Look at **Ephesians 2:19b-21**, “... you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, 20 built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone 21 in whom the whole structure, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord.” The idea is that God has put you in the place you are! My desire is to see each of you who is born again soar in the gifts

God’s Spirit may raise you to life and put you as a living stone in His Temple during the service. The test of regeneration is not a sinner’s prayer, but the omnipotent power of the Spirit raising us to life. What a mysterious work it is!

THE DEDICATION OF THE TEMPLE

2 Chron 5:1, “Thus all the work that Solomon did for the house of the Lord was finished.”

⁸ Wright, P. H. (2012). *Rose Then and Now Bible Map Atlas with Biblical Background and Culture* (p. 61). Torrance, CA: Rose Publishing.

⁹ Goldingay, J. (2012). *1 and 2 Chronicles for Everyone* (p. 77). Louisville, KY; London: Westminster John Knox Press; Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge.

¹⁰ James Montgomery Boice. *Ephesians*, 93.

2 Chron 5:6, “King Solomon and all the congregation of Israel, who had assembled before him, were before the ark, sacrificing so many sheep and oxen that they could not be counted or numbered.”

Oh how they worshipped the Lord on this day! And as they worshipped, the Lord met them!

THE FILLING OF THE TEMPLE

2 Chron 5:11-14, “And when the priests came out of the Holy Place (for all the priests who were present had consecrated themselves, without regard to their divisions, 12 and all the Levitical singers, Asaph, Heman, and Jeduthun, their sons and kinsmen, arrayed in fine linen, with cymbals, harps, and lyres, stood east of the altar with 120 priests who were trumpeters; 13 and it was the duty of the trumpeters and singers to make themselves heard in unison in praise and thanksgiving to the Lord), and when the song was raised, with trumpets and cymbals and other musical instruments, in praise to the Lord,

“For he is good,
for his steadfast love endures forever,”

the house, the house of the Lord, was filled with a cloud, 14 so that the priests could not stand to minister because of the cloud, for the glory of the Lord filled the house of God.”

This is what we want at Living Hope. We want the Lord to meet us! We want the glory cloud to fill us! **The result of this filling was praying.** Solomon began to pray. That’s what will happen when we are filled with the presence and glory of God: we will be a praying people.

SOLOMON’S PRAYER AT THE TEMPLE DEDICATION

We don’t have time to get into Solomon’s prayer in **2 Chronicles 6**, but it’s quite amazing. It’s really a prophecy. Especially he says, if they forsake the Lord, the Lord will discipline them and send them to foreign nations and put them in captivity, but He will never stop loving them.

That’s exactly what happens. The essence of Solomon’s prayer is that YHWH is a God of mercy. “Solomon’s prayer even anticipates the most extreme covenant punishment, that of exile from the covenant land. In that extreme event, God’s ear will still be open, a prayer of repentance will still be heard, and God will still forgive.”¹¹

GOD CONSUMES THE SACRIFICES: OUR FIRE FROM HEAVEN

2 Chron 7:1-3, “As soon as Solomon finished his prayer, fire came down from heaven and consumed the burnt offering and the sacrifices, and the glory of the Lord filled the temple. 2 And the priests could not enter the house of the Lord, because the glory of the Lord filled the Lord’s house. 3 When all the people of Israel saw the fire come down and the glory of the Lord on the temple, they bowed down with their faces to the ground on the pavement and worshiped and gave thanks to the Lord, saying, “For he is good, for his steadfast love endures forever.”

Oh that God Himself would manifest His presence in us! What’s the point?

FIRE FROM HEAVEN: God is Committed to You

The point is that God is committed to you. He loves you and wants to be with you, just as He was with Solomon.

The account of this awesome climax at the inauguration of the Temple brings home the reality of God’s awesomeness and of God’s love. On one hand Yahweh is someone so dynamic

¹¹ Elwell, W. A. (1995). *Evangelical Commentary on the Bible* (Vol. 3, 2 Ch 6:22). Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House.

and full of energy that it is wise not to come too close. On the other hand, “he is good, and his **commitment** lasts forever.” God’s goodness suggests kindness and generosity.¹²

God has come down as it were with “fire from heaven.” We have the Holy Spirit dwelling in us. “Our God is a consuming fire.” He dwells in us comforting us with His infinite, burning love.

If you are born again, the glory of God has come down from heaven and dwells in you. No longer are you God’s enemy! You are His Temple!

A PROMISE FROM GOD

The Lord appears to Solomon a second time and gives Him one final word about worship.

2 Chron 7:11-14, “Thus Solomon finished the house of the Lord and the king's house. All that Solomon had planned to do in the house of the Lord and in his own house he successfully accomplished. 12 Then the Lord appeared to Solomon in the night and said to him: “I have heard your prayer and have chosen this place for myself as a house of sacrifice. 13 When I shut up the heavens so that there is no rain, or command the locust to devour the land, or send pestilence among my people, 14 if my people who are called by my name humble themselves, and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and heal their land.””

SOLOMON DEPARTS FROM GOD

Sadly, though Solomon had the Temple built, he departed from the Living God. And when Solomon departed from God, there were not enough idols to fill the void and vacuum of his heart.

Is the worship of Jesus enough for you?

WE HAVE A GREATER TEMPLE THAN SOLOMON!

You Are God’s Temple

1 Corinthians 3:16, “Do you not know that you [all] are God’s temple and that God’s Spirit dwells in you?”

1 Corinthians 6:19-20, “Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own, 20 for you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body.”

1 Peter 2:5, “you yourselves like living stones are being built up as a spiritual house [Temple], to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.”

Bachelor Illustration

Hey listen, do you want to know what the atmosphere of my house was when I was a bachelor? Let me tell you about a visitor I had one day to describe what it was like. I was not yet married to Jill, but I was to go over to my future in-laws home. I can’t remember what we were doing that night. I told them I would meet them outside at a certain time. Well, one thing I learned that night was that my father-in-law is always early! And he decided he would come inside my bachelor pad. He didn’t even knock!

I was pretty horrified because my floor was filled with dirty laundry and books. My sink was filled with dishes. Saturday was cleaning day for me, and it was only Friday.

¹² Goldingay, J. (2012). *1 and 2 Chronicles for Everyone* (p. 96). Louisville, KY; London: Westminster John Knox Press; Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge.

Can I tell you something that when I got married the atmosphere of my home changed? It never looks like a bachelor pad!

You are God's Dwelling Place

As a Christian, you are the place where God lives. If you are saved, God lives in you. Where ever you go, He goes. God is with you. He is putting His thoughts in your mind. He is putting a hunger in your heart for His voice—His Word. He knows us, and we know Him. He tells us where to go, what to do, how to behave. We are moved by Him. He changes us on the inside. He transforms our thoughts. He softens our attitudes. He puts love for Him and for others in our heart.

If you are born again, you God's habitation. Your body the Temple of the Holy Spirit. Ask yourself this question: When people see my life, can they say: 'God lives there'?

IV. The Greater Savior, 1 Kings 11.

1 Kings 11 tells us that Solomon wasn't able to save Israel. Because of his great sin and compromise with foreign women, his heart was turned away from God.

And so Solomon lost Israel to foreign nations.

Solomon's Divine Instructions

Solomon began his reign in fellowship with the Lord, but gradually his heart turned away, and he began to worship the gods of his many foreign wives.

Deuteronomy 17:16-18 warned the Hebrew kings not to multiply horses and chariots, wives, or gold, but Solomon did all three (1 Kings 10:14, 26, 28; 11:1-8).¹³

Deut 17:16-18, "Only he [Israel's king] must not acquire many horses for himself ...

¹⁷ And he shall not acquire many wives for himself, lest his heart turn away,

nor shall he acquire for himself excessive silver and gold.

¹⁸ "And when he sits on the throne of his kingdom, he shall write for himself in a book a copy of this law, approved by the Levitical priests. ¹⁹ And it shall be with him, and he shall read in it all the days of his life, that he may learn to fear the Lord his God by keeping all the words of this law and these statutes, and doing them, ²⁰ that his heart may not be lifted up above his brothers..."

Solomon's Defies God's Instructions

Solomon broke these precepts that God gave to him. He violated them. With all the wisdom Solomon had, he became as a dumb person. We read about this in 1 Kings 11.

1 Kings 11:1-8, "Now King Solomon loved many foreign women, along with the daughter of Pharaoh: Moabite, Ammonite, Edomite, Sidonian, and Hittite women,² from the nations concerning which the Lord had said to the people of Israel, "You shall not enter into marriage with them, neither shall they with you, for surely they will turn away your heart after their gods." Solomon clung to these in love.³ He had 700 wives, who were princesses, and 300 concubines. And his wives turned away his heart.⁴ For when Solomon was old his wives turned away his heart after other gods, and his heart was not wholly true to the Lord his God, as was the heart of David his father.⁵ For Solomon went after Ashtoreth the goddess of the Sidonians, and after Milcom the

¹³ Wiersbe, W. W. (1993). *Wiersbe's Expository Outlines on the Old Testament* (2 Ch 1-9). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

abomination of the Ammonites. ⁶ So Solomon did what was evil in the sight of the Lord and did not wholly follow the Lord, as David his father had done. ⁷ Then Solomon built a high place for Chemosh the abomination of Moab, and for Molech the abomination of the Ammonites, on the mountain east of Jerusalem. ⁸ And so he did for all his foreign wives, who made offerings and sacrificed to their gods.

The Lord's Anger toward His Children

1 Kings 11:9, “And the Lord was angry with Solomon, because his heart had turned away from the Lord, the God of Israel, who had appeared to him twice ¹⁰ and had commanded him concerning this thing, that he should not go after other gods. But he did not keep what the Lord commanded.”

Here we see that Solomon has a great failure. And though we shall see how he repents later on, there are real consequences for sin. “Be sure your sin will find you out.” For the child of God, the Lord will not allow us to live comfortably in sin. Not only will we be miserable in sin, but life will become very **painful**.

Whom the Lord Loves, He Disciplines

Hebrews 12:5-6, “My son, do not regard lightly the discipline of the Lord, nor be weary when reproved by him. ⁶ For the Lord disciplines the one he loves, and chastises every son whom he receives.”

Discipline is Painful

Don't forget the beautiful teaching of **Hebrews 12:11**, “For the moment all discipline seems painful rather than pleasant, but later it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.”

How can the Lord be angry toward his children? Whom the Lord loves He disciplines.

It was not simply the sin that made God angry, as if somehow the sin could be separated from the sinner; it was the man who committed this sin who became the personal object of divine wrath. The Lord was angry with Solomon. His response confronts us with a biblical truth that most people would rather not talk about, even if they happen to believe it, which most people do not. That biblical truth is the wrath of God.¹⁴

The anger of God is not an irrational emotion, but a righteous rejection of sin.¹⁵ God is especially angry with those who sin in the light. Sinners will sin. Those who know nothing but darkness will continue to grope in the darkness of sin. But God is especially angry with those who have the light of His fellowship and presence who continue in sin. There are serious consequences even for God's dear elect children if we continue in sin.

Solomon Will Lose the Kingdom

For Solomon, this means he will have the Kingdom of Israel torn from him. We will find out next week that this gets very ugly with his son Rehoboam.

1 Kings 11:11, “Therefore the Lord said to Solomon, “Since this has been your practice and you have not kept my covenant and my statutes that I have commanded you, I will surely tear the kingdom from you and will give it to your servant.”

¹⁴ Ryken, P. G. (2011). *1 Kings*. (R. D. Phillips, I. M. Duguid, & P. G. Ryken, Eds.) (p. 303). Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Publishing.

¹⁵ Ibid, 304.

Solomon's Kingdom in Decline

While the years of Solomon's reign were undoubtedly Israel's greatest in terms of wealth, fame, and political power, they were also the worst in terms of spiritual devotion to the Lord. Yes, Solomon began his reign at the altar, sacrificing to the Lord and asking Him for wisdom, but that didn't continue.¹⁶

Solomon's Repentance: Wrote Ecclesiastes

Though the Bible doesn't say that Solomon repented, yet the Bible does speak of His salvation. Scripture tells us that "Solomon loved the Lord" (I Kings 3:3).

And though the Scriptures tell us of Solomon's radical disobedience, we find out in the book of **Ecclesiastes**, that Solomon's mind had changed about this world.

Solomon repented. Solomon says there is no ultimate meaning in life by seeking riches or pleasure or building cities, or eating food, or even having great authority or multitudes of friends. His conclusion is that everything is meaningless without the Lord. We might say it this way, "Without Christ, all is meaningless!"

Solomon said it this way, "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty [purpose] of man" (**Eccl 12:13**, KJV). Fear God – this is the OT concept of faith. Trust God! Surrender to YHWH! And live out that faith! Keep His commandments! This is the chief end of man. Love God and enjoy Him forever!

Solomon's Reign Ends – He Sleeps with His Fathers

2 Chron 9:30-31, "Solomon reigned in Jerusalem over all Israel forty years. ³¹ And Solomon slept with his fathers and was buried in the city of David his father, and Rehoboam his son reigned in his place."

SUMMARY OF SOLOMON'S LIFE

The entire life of Solomon can be summarized by the words of Puritan Richard Sibbes:

"There is more mercy in Christ than sin in us."
~ **Richard Sibbes**

Conclusion

Solomon was no Savior. He was a king in need of a Savior. You and I are not the Savior - we can only point people to the a Savior. no other name!!

Acts 4:12, "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved."

Dr Popaderos and the Meaning of Life

As we close, I want to share with you one of my favorite stories about a very interesting well-educated Greek philosopher whose name is Dr. Alexander Papaderos.

Dr. Papaderos every summer taught a class on ethics for two weeks on the island of Crete (where he was born in 1933). And one particular summer just as he was getting ready to close the class, the last few minutes of the class, he said, "Now are there any questions before we go?" And just as he was getting ready to say, "OK then you're dismissed," a little man in the back of the

¹⁶ Wiersbe, W. W. (1993). *Wiersbe's Expository Outlines on the Old Testament* (2 Ch 1–9). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

room, a rather timid looking man, sort of carefully raised his hand and said, “Dr. Papaderos,” “Yes” “I have a question” “Yes, what is it?” He said, “I’d like to know, what is the meaning of life?”

As you can imagine, people were ready to go home, and they were very irritated by this little fellow’s heavy question!

Dr. Papaderos very quickly quieted the group, he said to the class, “You know, if you don’t mind I’d like to answer that question.” He reached into his back pocket, and took out his wallet. He took out of the wallet a little mirror about the size of a fifty-cent piece, honed down on the edges, kind of sparkling.

And then he told this tale, he said, “When I was a child, I began to realize that I could have so much fun with that mirror. I would simply catch the glint of the Sun, and shine that mirror into an otherwise darkened place. As I grew older I began to learn that this is no child’s toy. This is really a metaphor for my life. Now I am not the light—I am not the source of the light. I am simply a broken mirror fragment. But if I allow the sun to shine on my mirror fragment, it is amazing what light I can bring into darkness.” Then he said, “Ladies and Gentlemen, that is the meaning of life.”

Solomon the Mirror Fragment

Saints, Solomon was just a broken little mirror fragment. He was chipped up and messed up, but the Lord used him.

He follows in a long line of sinners saved by grace. None of us is very much, but each of us is a mirror fragment. We are not the Light. We are not the source of the Light. We are simply a broken mirror fragment. But when we permit the SON to hit our mirror fragment, and then bounce off into the life of a darkened heart, there can be change, there can be illumination.

Greater than Solomon!

Let us shine the light of our true and everlasting King of all kings and Lord of all lords to this dark world today! The light of Jesus is greater than the light of a thousand suns. His kingdom is greater than the greatest kings. **Infinitely greater than Solomon!**