

A Man Called Solomon
Fremont Missionary Baptist Church
Dr. H. Powell Dew, Jr.
January 17, 2021

Diaspora XLIV – The Scattered Church – Forty-fourth
Sunday

Text: I Kings 3:4-15

Purpose: Solomon's life reflected all the excesses that can be obtained in life. In the end, he didn't find contentment in women, wine, laughter, riches, buildings, houses, or land. The only contentment he discovered was in enjoying life as you live it. Live satisfied with your work, family, and possessions. Live your life in the context of your creator God. "Fear God and keep His commandments, for this is man's all. For God will bring every work into judgment, including every secret thing, whether good or evil."

There is a lie of Satan permeating our society today. Many of our television programs have begun promoting this current theme. Several years ago, Toby Keith had a popular country music song by the name, "Stays in Mexico." In that song, a man and woman become entangled in sin and then the lie comes in and says, "What happens down in Mexico, stays in Mexico."



This lie is also promoted through at least one television program named, CSI: Las Vegas. In that show they advertise, “What happens in Vegas, stays in Vegas.” Society refuses to acknowledge that they will be accountable to God for their actions. Even if it happens in Mexico or Vegas!

Introduction

I recently read the words of a German forester whose family had been harvesting trees for 400 years. The trees he harvested were planted 180 years ago by his great-grandfather. The trees he plants won't be ready until his great-grandchildren are born. He harvests seeds sown by men he never knew, and he sees himself as part of a chain. “Every generation must make a choice,” he said in an interview. “They can either pillage or plant. They can rape the landscape and get rich, or they can care for the landscape and leave an investment for the future.” Dependent upon the past, responsible for the future, that man is part of a family chain.



We are all like that – children of the past, parents of the future. We are the recipients of the work done by those who lived before us, and we are a major factor in the lives of those who will live on after us. It has always been that way. Each of our stories began before we were born and will extend long after we are gone.¹ The life of Solomon is no different. Solomon's life and Israel's future are part of a chain of events that are linked together.

¹ Where Wisdom turns to Foolishness, David Jeremiah, Study Guide, page 10.

Solomon's Past

Last week, we examined the life of a man by the name of David. David was the second king of Israel after the death of Saul. David consolidated the families of Israel into a great nation. After a long period of bloodshed, peace began to rein in the land. David was content to send his armies out and do the difficult work of securing the nation's borders and eliminating the enemies that remained in the land.

One evening, David walked out on his rooftop and saw a woman bathing on a rooftop below him. (Samuel 11:2) This beautiful woman's name was Bathsheba.



David called his servants and inquired as to who the woman was. He dispatched his servants to bring the woman to the King. You see, King David thought that what happens in the palace stays in the palace. But David found out that his sin became the talk of the town.

Bathsheba became pregnant and David tried to conceal this sin by inviting her husband Uriah, back to visit his wife. But Uriah remained faithful to his men and his mission and did not go home to see his wife. When that didn't work, David tried to conceal the sin by having Uriah exposed in battle and killed. Uriah died, and David married Bathsheba. Nathan the prophet confronted David with a story in need of justice. David unknowingly pronounced judgment upon himself when he



thought he was judging another person. For the remainder of David's life, his family was in shambles.

David's struggles with his family included one son trying to assassinate him. Another took the law into their own hands and murdered the one that raped Tamar, David's daughter. The bright light in David's life was the son that was later born to Bathsheba. David named this son Solomon, which means "the peaceful." Nathan the prophet later referred to Solomon as "Jedidiah" which literally means "the darling of Jehovah." Very little is known about Solomon's childhood but so much is recorded in scripture about his life, his wealth, his wisdom, his folly, and his failures.

Solomon's Wise Choice

As time went by, David grew old and knew time had come for him to die. David chose Solomon to inherit the throne of David. David ruled over Hebron for seven years and he ruled in Jerusalem for 33 years. For forty years David reigned as king.

After reigning over Israel for about three years, the Lord came to Solomon in a dream. In that dream, the Lord said, "***Ask! What shall I give you?***" If the Lord came to you, what would you ask for? Wealth, Long Life, Pleasure, Power, Influence, the elimination of your enemies? Many of us would be tempted to ask for those things.



In Solomon's case, he asked the Lord for "*an understanding heart to judge Your people, that I may*

discern between good and evil. For who is able to judge the great people of Yours." The Lord was so impressed with this answer; he gave Solomon the wisdom he asked for as well as riches, power, and influence.

Solomon's Poor Choice

Over time, Solomon made many wise choices. He wisely divided up the administrative duties necessary to rule the kingdom. He eliminated many of the enemies that David had warned him about prior to his death. One of Solomon's greatest accomplishments was in the building of the temple. His father had accumulated great wealth in anticipation of his son Solomon building a wonderful temple for God. The Lord had prevented David from building that temple because he was a man with great blood on his hands. The Lord promised David that it would be his son that would build the temple.



Solomon began the great task of building the temple. He employed thousands of people to quarry stone, forge gold, silver, and brass instruments for temple use. He employed others to make the garments for the priests. This building project became the passion of the people. When the temple was dedicated, thousands of animals were offered as a sacrifice to the Lord. It was a day of National Day of celebration.

While Solomon was king, his wealth increased, his possessions multiplied, his building projects were impressive, his horse stables were the envy of neighboring armies, his fleet of ships covered the seas. The rumors

concerning Solomon's wealth filled the known world. The Queen of Sheba, from Ethiopia, came to see the wealth and wisdom of Solomon and left stunned and impressed.

When God granted Solomon this wisdom, there was a condition that God gave him. God told him, *"If you walk in My ways, to keep My statutes and My commandments, as your father David walked, then I will lengthen your days."* The command of obedience was placed on Solomon and he failed. Sadly, the nation suffered the consequences of his disobedience.



Nations today still suffer the consequences of ungodly leaders. Solomon failed to keep God's commandments, and 439 years later, the nation was ripped apart, defeated, plundered, and carried into Babylon.

READ I Kings 11: 1-8

The Result of Solomon's Sin

God came to Solomon twice and rebuked Solomon about this sin. But Solomon refused to listen. God said, *"Because you have done this, and have not kept My covenant and My statutes, which I have commanded you, I will surely tear the kingdom away from you and give it to your servant. Nevertheless, I will not do it in your days for the sake of your father David; I will tear it out of the hand of your son. However, I will not tear away the whole kingdom; I will give one tribe (Judah) to your son for the sake of my servant David, and for the sake of Jerusalem which I have chosen."* (I Kings 11:11-13)

Thus, at the death of Solomon, God allowed (through the foolishness of Solomon's son) the kingdom to be split into two kingdoms – the Northern and the Southern Kingdom. As you read about Israel after the death of Solomon, you see that it was no longer a United Kingdom, rather it was divided.



The Wisdom of Solomon

We can see the terrible result of sin through the life of Solomon. If we are to be wise, we should take careful note of some of the wisdom Solomon gained. We can learn a great deal from others positive examples as well as the negative examples.

Much of Solomon's life wisdom can be found in three books – Song of Solomon, Proverbs, and Ecclesiastes.

Song of Solomon is a unique book in the Old Testament.



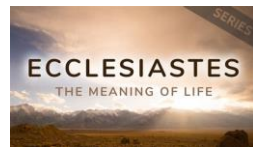
When the Old Testament was being canonized, this book almost didn't make it in. The reason was that many of the saying and thoughts were considered to be too risqué to be in the bible. It is my understanding that Jewish boys cannot read this book until they are much older. Some have compared this book to a love story between Solomon and one of his many wives. Others have called it a metaphor of God's love for Israel. Others have taken a New Testament approach and said it demonstrates God's love for us. However you examine it, it definitely is a love story.

Proverbs is a collection of short sayings or thoughts that if applied to one's life, allows one to avoid disaster and one can live a successful

life. It is thought that Solomon wrote this when he was a younger man. The advice in this book is for men and women of all ages if they seek to gain a heart of wisdom and to live a blessed life. This book is comprised of thirty-one chapters. The last chapter focuses upon the godly characteristics of a woman. Young men, make sure you read this as a model when you begin to search for a wife. Many people that read the bible daily have added one chapter a day from the book of Proverbs in their daily devotions.



The third book attributed to Solomon is the book of Ecclesiastes. The first verse is attributed to the “Preacher, the son of David, king in Jerusalem.” This is a book of the bible that I have read over and over during some of my most difficult grief filled days. As I have grown older, I find that there is much wisdom buried within this book. Many individuals believe that Solomon wrote this book when he was older and had experienced many things in life. Some view this book as a cynic's view of life. To me, this is a book containing the muses of a man that has seen life, experienced life, and has now written down his observations.



**READ ECCLESIASTES 1:1-2:11 and
ECCLESIASTES 11:9-12:7, 13, 14**

If the preacher Solomon was standing before you today, he would remind us that no one knows the day nor the hour of

our leaving this earth. Repeatedly he would say that the works of our hand, the things we vainly strive to perfect, (like housework, yard work) are all vanity. Solomon would say seek the Lord in your youth. Obey his commandments early in life. Then as we obey our Creator, we will abide in His provision of happiness. The way of the Lord is a life of contentment and peace. The way of the world is a life of strife and darkness.



Enjoy the good things of life. Don't save that candle for a special day – burn it today. Don't save that dress for a special occasion – wear it today. Don't put off confessing your sins to God and seeking His forgiveness – seek Him today. God will one day judge us. We need to live in the NOW and not in the hoped for, but uncertain future.

The lie that the world tells you is “What happens in Vegas, stays in Vegas.” Solomon closes out Ecclesiastes with these words, “*For God will bring every work into judgment, including every secret thing, whether good or evil.*” God sees what you do, and He WILL judge.

The Good News

We do not need to live in fear of a wrathful God. There is good news. That God is quick to forgive us if we come to Him with a willing heart. If we confess our sin, He is faithful and just to forgive us of our sin. (I John 1:9) We no longer need to live in fear or trembling. We have a loving father that will hear us when we pray and seek His face.

That's living a life well pleasing to God.

LET US PRAY