

SOLOMON LESSONS FROM A FALLEN KING

STUDY TWO

Solomon in Living Color

Selected Scriptures from 1 Kings

Solomon deeply loved the Lord. He walked with God, and he modeled godliness. God was with Solomon before He exalted him.

—Pastor Charles R. Swindoll

ILLUSTRATING God's care for His creation, Jesus pointed to the lilies of the field and made an interesting comparison:

"They don't work or make their clothing, yet Solomon in all his glory was not dressed as beautifully as they are." (Matthew 6:28–29, emphasis added)

For His analogy to have impact, Jesus chose history's most glorious king. The prince of Persia or the monarch of Babylon wouldn't do. Only Solomon suited His point, because in intelligence, wealth, and wisdom, Solomon outshined all others. Solomon stood alone at the pinnacle of human glory.

Even in Solomon's day, his glory was legendary. When accounts of Solomon's splendor reached the queen of Sheba in Africa, she shook her head in disbelief. She caravaned all the way to Jerusalem to find out whether the reports were true. What she saw took her breath away.

When the queen of Sheba had seen the wisdom of Solomon, the house which he had built, the food at his table, the seating of his servants, the attendance of his ministers and their attire, his cupbearers and their attire, and his stairway by which he went up to the house of the LORD, she was breathless. (2 Chronicles 9:3–4 NASB)

Solomon's wisdom especially astounded her. She exclaimed, "I had not heard the half of your great wisdom! It is far beyond what I was told" (9:6). Through the biblical account, let's follow the tracks of this ancient queen's caravan to Jerusalem and see for ourselves the many manifestations of the wisdom of this great man.



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PREPARE YOUR HEART

When people seek wisdom apart from the Scriptures, they neglect the wisest words ever recorded. Pray for insight from God's Word as you study. Use the following space to write your prayer.



TURN TO THE SCRIPTURES

First Kings picks up Israel's history about 971 BC, just before David's death when Solomon was crowned. The book's purpose is not just to record history but to teach spiritual truth through history. Bible scholar Thomas Constable points out the central lesson Israel illustrated:

God intended that the nation Israel demonstrate to all people how glorious it can be to live under the government of God.¹

During this brief window of time, the world caught a glimpse of the blessings of life in God's kingdom. God reigned *through* Solomon. Under this divine co-regency, Solomon reached the height of human potential and the nation blossomed—"all of Judah and Israel lived in peace and safety" (1 Kings 4:25).



Observation: Solomon in Living Color

We can see manifestations of Solomon's wisdom expressed in four areas of his life. As you read the verses below, *observe* the descriptions, repeating phrases, and key words. Locate unfamiliar places on a map in the back of your Bible or in an online [Bible map](#) of Israel during Solomon's day.

Solomon—Man of God

"The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom," Solomon wrote (Proverbs 9:10 NASB), and his life modeled this truth. What qualities of Solomon's heart toward God do you observe in [1 Kings 3:7–9](#)?

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Solomon's prayer of dedication at the temple and his blessing of the people in [1 Kings 8:22–59](#) express deep spiritual passion. It's a long passage, but don't hurry through. Take time to dwell on Solomon's words. What aspects of his relationship with God do you observe, even in his posture before God? Note the "if-then" structure and the themes that repeat.

What crucial points do you see in Solomon's concluding charge in [8:60–61](#)?

Solomon's prayer of dedication is one of the longest prayers in the Old Testament. "It's all for Your glory," Solomon declared to the Lord. He really was a man of God. —Pastor Chuck Swindoll

Solomon—Author and Composer

Solomon was what we might call a Renaissance man. What expertise in the arts and sciences do you observe in [1 Kings 4:29–34](#)?

Solomon outpaced the smartest minds—"all the wise men of the East and the wise men of Egypt" and even "Ethan the Ezrahite and the sons of Mahol—Heman, Calcol, and Darda" (4:30–31). Unfamiliar names to us, but they were the Einsteins, the Nobel and Pulitzer Prize winners, and the elite scholars of Solomon's day. Intellectually, Solomon was in a league of his own.

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Solomon—Administrator and Architect

Solomon also excelled in administration and architecture, rivaling the best of today's CEOs and designers. *First Kings 4:1–19* lists those to whom he delegated responsibilities and details the masterful way he administered his government. What were some of the projects Solomon oversaw, according to *Ecclesiastes 2:4–6*?

His crowning achievement was the temple he built for the Lord. Read *1 Kings 6*. What impresses you about the craftsmanship and elegance of this structure?

Solomon—Diplomat and Equestrian

How did Solomon display wise diplomacy in his relationship with the king of Tyre, according to *1 Kings 5:1–12*?

Solomon also cornered the equine market. Horses and chariots were signs of military might, and he had plenty. How did Solomon build up his forces in *10:26–29*?

Here was a man whose mind was broad, deep, and varied. I see in Solomon a wedding of authentic godliness and academic excellence. They can coexist.
—Pastor Chuck Swindoll

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Interpretation: The Purpose of Solomon's Temple

Solomon's temple was constructed with the finest materials and the highest quality workmanship. Taking seven years to build it, Solomon designed the temple to represent heaven on earth. The inner sanctuary was overlaid with solid gold. In this gleaming chamber stood two golden cherubim with their 15-foot wings stretching wall-to-wall. The angels towered over the ark of the covenant—the centerpiece of the Lord's relationship to Israel.

On the day of dedication, “The glorious presence of the LORD filled the Temple of the LORD” (1 Kings 8:11). God was dwelling with His people.

Reflect on a portion of Solomon's prayer of dedication in *1 Kings 8:27–30*. What was the purpose of the temple in Israel's covenant relationship with God?

In the rest of the prayer, Solomon painted scenarios in which the nation would desperately need God—when people sin, when famines strike, and when enemies attack. According to *8:48–51*, what must the people do? What promise from God did Solomon claim?

What principle can you draw about God and how He relates to those who come to Him in humble repentance?

You know why they called the Most Holy Place the sanctuary? Because that's where God dwelt. Technically, no building should ever be called a sanctuary. Today, the Christian is the sanctuary. —Pastor Chuck Swindoll

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Correlation: You Are a Temple

On the day of Pentecost, the Holy Spirit filled not a building of gold but the bodies of ordinary people who had put their faith and hope in Jesus Christ (*Acts 2:1–4*). Christians are the temple of God now. What points did Paul make in the following verses as implications of this marvelous truth?

1 Corinthians 3:16–17: _____

1 Corinthians 6:19–20: _____

2 Corinthians 6:15–18: _____

Summarize what these verses say about following God in wisdom today.

Solomon was able to say to others, “Let your heart be wholly dedicated to God, completely and thoroughly.” I find in him genuine humility, personal integrity, and real scriptural loyalty. He followed the Scriptures to the letter.

—Pastor Chuck Swindoll



Application: Shine like Solomon

Solomon shined “in all his glory” because he walked closely with the God of glory. Later, sadly, Solomon gave his heart to others and fell into moral compromise. During this formative, golden age of his reign, however, while he was building the temple and growing in wisdom, Solomon’s heart was wholly devoted to God.

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In what ways can you model Solomon's spiritual devotion, based on what you've observed in him?

Solomon modeled excellence in many areas of applied wisdom—the arts, natural sciences, architecture, administration, business, and diplomacy. Does Solomon's devotion to learning inspire you to grow in a particular area of wisdom?

Solomon's prayer at the dedication of the temple modeled how all of us can relate to our Savior. What is your daunting situation? Do you need to come to God—through Christ and in the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit—in humble prayer for mercy and grace? Use the Final Prayer section of this study to express your heart for the Lord and need of Him.



A FINAL PRAYER

Write your prayer here.

ENDNOTE

1. Thomas L. Constable, in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary, Old Testament*, ed. John F. Walvoord and Roy B. Zuck (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1985), 485.

For the 2024 broadcasts, this *Searching the Scriptures* study was developed by Bryce Klabunde, vice president, *Searching the Scriptures* Ministries, based upon the original outlines, charts, and transcripts of Charles R. Swindoll's messages. Copyright © 1978, 2024 by Charles R. Swindoll, Inc. All rights are reserved worldwide. Duplication of copyrighted material for commercial use is strictly prohibited.

