



## Appendix 1. Solomon Participant Handouts

If you are working with a class or small group, feel free to duplicate the handouts at no additional charge. If you'd like to print 8-1/2" x 11" or A4 size pages, you can download the free Participant Guide handout sheets at:

[www.jesuswalk.com/solomon/solomon-lesson-handouts.pdf](http://www.jesuswalk.com/solomon/solomon-lesson-handouts.pdf)

### Discussion Questions

You'll typically find 4 to 5 questions for each lesson. Each question may include several sub-questions. These are designed to get group members engaged in discussion of the key points of the passage. If you are running short of time, feel free to skip questions or portions of questions.

### Suggestions for Classes and Groups

Individuals who are studying online can probably complete one full lesson per week, though they'll need to be diligent to do so. But some of the chapters just have too much material for a one-hour class discussion. You may want to be selective, or to extend your class session beyond six weeks.

Feel free to arrange the lessons any way that works best for your group. Because of the length of these handouts – and to keep down the page count so we can keep the book price lower – they are being made available at no cost online.

[www.jesuswalk.com/solomon/solomon-lesson-handouts.pdf](http://www.jesuswalk.com/solomon/solomon-lesson-handouts.pdf)

### Charts and Maps

You have permission to use the charts and maps in your teaching.

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## Introduction to Solomon's Time

### Political Situation during Solomon's Reign (970-931 BC)

There are no major world powers moving to exercise dominance in the Near East during this period, and

**Egypt.** 21<sup>st</sup> Dynasty, a period of decline and political instability.

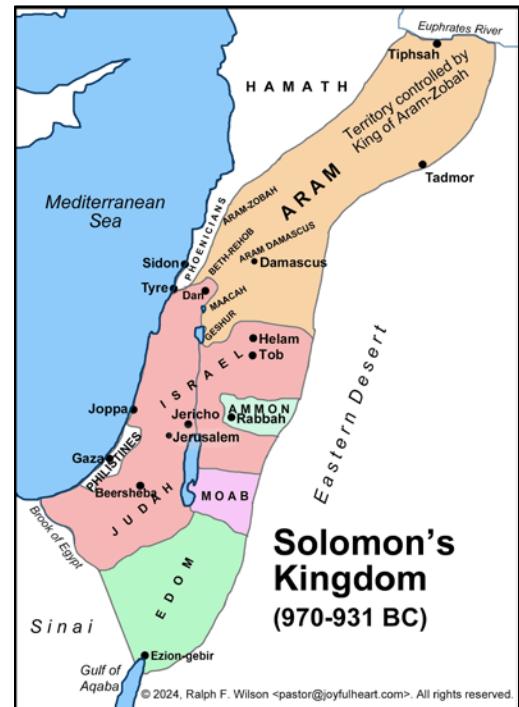
**Phoenicia.** Tyre and Sidon are allies and vassals of Israel, not enemies.

**Mesopotamia.** Assyrians and Babylonians don't rise until centuries later.

### Timeline

While dates are not firmly established during this period, here is a tentative timeline of events in Solomon's reign.

Solomon's birth	991 BC	Solomon dies, Rehoboam reigns	931/30
Solomon's coronation as co-regent	973/72	Division of the kingdom	931/30
Solomon's sole rule	971/70	Pharaoh Shoshenq I strips gold from temple and palace	925
Solomon's dream at Gibeon	970	Northern kingdom deported by Assyria	722
Started building the temple	967/66	Temple destroyed by Babylonians	587
Solomon and Pharaoh Siamun	967	Temple rebuilt after the Exile	537-520
Temple completed	959	Temple remodeled by Herod the Great	40 to 4
Palace completed	946	Temple destroyed by Romans	70 AD



## 1. Solomon's Path to Kingship (1 Kings 1-2)

### 1.1 The Davidic Covenant (2 Samuel 7:4-17; 1 Chronicles 17:3-15)

Extremely important theme throughout the Old and New Testaments, especially for Solomon's era and Jesus as Messiah.

1. **Temple.** David won't build the temple "house."
2. **Dynasty.** God will build a "house" for David, an everlasting dynasty, even though he and his descendants sin in the future. Jesus is the fulfilment.
3. **Temple Builder.** One of David's natural sons will build the temple/

**Q1. (2 Samuel 7:11-16) What are the main provisions of the Davidic Covenant? What does it say about the temple? About David's descendants? About discipline? About mercy? About the throne?**

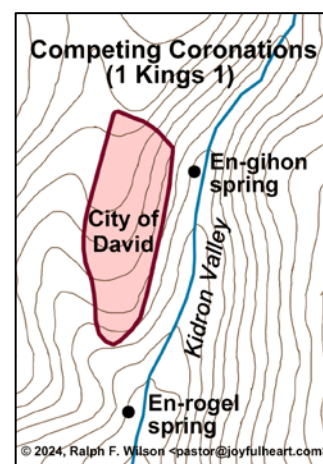
### 1.2 Solomon's Birth (2 Samuel 11-12)

Jedidiah means, "the beloved of Yahweh." (2 Samuel 12:24-25)

### 1.3 Solomon Named as David's Successor (1 Chronicles 22:6-19)

Two traditions regarding Solomon's accession to David's throne.

1. **Named successor.** David names Solomon as successor and temple builder (1 Chronicles 22, 29).
2. **Attempted coup.** Adonijah attempts a coup that fails (1 Kings 1-2).



### 1.4. Solomon's Accession to the Throne (1 Kings 1)

**Q2. (1 Kings 1; 2 Chronicles 22:7) What indications do we have that Solomon has been chosen by God to build the temple? How does God protect his choice in spite of political intrigues? Why do you think Nathan the prophet is the first to move to protect Solomon? (Hint: see 2 Samuel 7:11-16)**

**Q3. (1 Kings 2:2-3) David charges Solomon to observe God's commandments. Why are we tempted to break God's commandments as a means to an end, such as lying to win political points or job advancement? What does obedience have to do with prosperity?**

### 1.5 Solomon's Grand Coronation and Public Charge (1 Chronicles 29-30)

### 1.6 Settling Scores (1 Kings 2)

**Q4. (1 Kings 2:13-46) Why doesn't Solomon act more quickly against David's enemies and his own? What does this indicate about Solomon? Do you think God is pleased with Solomon's dealing with enemies in these ways? In an absolute monarchy, what are the balance points between protection of the throne (the state), justice, and mercy?**

**Bonus question: Jesus commanded his disciples, "Love your enemies" as a rule by which to conduct their lives. Can it (should it) be extended to affairs of the courts or of government?**

## **1.7 Jesus Messiah, Son of David**

### Lessons for Disciples

This chapter yields several lessons for disciples – some by promise, others by example.

1. The Davidic Covenant promises that David's kingly dynasty will be established forever. Though his descendants may sin and be punished, the promise will continue (2 Samuel 7:11-16).
2. David's son builds the temple rather than he, since he had shed blood. (2 Samuel 7:12; 1 Chronicles 22:8).
3. Solomon's father commits adultery and murder, yet God selects his son by Bathsheba, showing God's mercy (2 Samuel 12).
4. God loves Solomon and gives him the name, Jedidiah, which means, "beloved by Yahweh" (2 Samuel 2:12-25).
5. God protects his chosen successor to David, in spite of an older brother's attempted coup to seize the throne. Ultimately, God achieves his purposes in spite of man's diversions.
6. Jesus Messiah, Son of David, is the ultimate fulfillment of the Davidic Covenant (Matthew 21:9; Mark 11:10; John 12:13).
7. God has enthroned Jesus in heaven at his right hand with all authority in heaven and on earth (Matthew 28:18; Ephesians 1:20-23; Philippians 2:9-11).

## 2. Solomon's Wisdom (1 Kings 3-4)

### 2.1 Solomon's Early Errors (1 Kings 3:1-3)

1. Taking as wife the daughter of Pharaoh (verse 1), and
2. Sacrificing on the high places (verses 2-3).

Intermarriage with Unbelievers (1 Kings 3:1; Deuteronomy 7:3-4a)

High Places (1 Kings 3:2-3; Numbers 33:52; Deuteronomy 12:11, 13-14, 18; cf. Leviticus 17:5; Hezekiah: 2 Kings 18:3-4a; Josiah: 2 Kings 23:8a).

**Q5. (1 Kings 3:1-4) In what way does Solomon's marriage to Pharaoh's daughter enhance his status in the Ancient Near East? How does this marriage compromise him as a follower of Yahweh? How does his worship on the high places – and failure to destroy them – damage the purity of Yahweh worship for centuries to follow? In what areas do our compromises as parents and pastors impact our own discipleship and the faith of our families and congregations?**

### 2.2 Solomon's Prayer for Wisdom, God's Answer (1 Kings 3:4-15)

**Q6. (1 Kings 3:5-15) What does Solomon's answer to God's question tell us about Solomon's heart at this time? Do you serve Jesus for what he can do for you or for what you can do for him? Why is singleness of heart so important to true discipleship?**

The term translated "govern" (NIV, ESV, NRSV), "judge" (KJV), used twice in verse 9, is *shāpat*, "judge, govern," which can refer to the whole process of governing.

### 2.3 Wisdom, Discernment, and Knowledge in Ancient Israel

**Wisdom** (*hākām*). The Hebrew noun for "wisdom" is *hākām*, from the root *hākam*, "to be wise, act wise(ly)." The essential idea is a manner of thinking and attitude concerning life's experiences; including matters of general interest and basic morality.

**Discernment** (*bîn*). "Discerning" (NIV, ESV, NRSV), "understanding" (KJV) is the verb *bîn*, "understand, consider, perceive."

**Knowledge** (*maddā'*), from *yāda'*, "to know," "knowledge, science, thought,"

### 2.4 Solomon's Judicial Wisdom (1 Kings 3:16-28)

Solomon's Wise Decision concerning the Woman's Baby (1 Kings 3:16-28)

Solomon's Support of True Justice (Deuteronomy 16:18-20; 24:17; 10:17-19; cf. 24:22)

"Justice" in verse 20 is *śedeq*, "justice, righteousness," from *śādēq*, "to be just, righteous." This root basically connotes conformity to an ethical or moral standard.

Justice in the Proverbs and Psalm 72

Solomon is deeply involved in collecting and curating proverbs (1 Kings 4:32). Many relate to justice (Proverbs 17:23; 18:5; 20:8; 21:15; 29:4; 29:7, 14). In Psalm 72, also attributed to Solomon, we see a prayer for royal justice and righteousness.

Messiah's Justice (Isaiah 9 and 11)

Jesus Christ, Solomon's descendant, is also known for his absolute fairness in executing justice. Isaiah prophesies of the Messiah (Isaiah 9:7; 11:3b-5)

**Q7. (1 Kings 3:16-28) Why does the Scripture emphasize justice for the poor and disadvantaged, the alien and the orphan? Why are courts often inclined to favor the wealthy? Why do societies throughout the ages tend to perpetuate discrimination against outsiders? In what ways should social justice be a value for followers of Yahweh and of Jesus in our day?**

## 2.5 Solomon's Administrative Wisdom (1 Kings 4)

Twelve Tax Districts (1 Kings 4:7-19)

### 1. Taxation.

**2. Tribal Division.** In only half of the cases, the districts conform to the traditional tribal boundaries.

**3. Favoritism.** According to the Hebrew text, the tribe of Judah, the largest and Solomon's own tribe, is not included among these 12 districts.

Peace and Prosperity (1 Kings 4:20, 25)

Suzerainty over Neighboring Countries (1 Kings 4:21)

- 1. Tribute.** The conquered states pay regular tribute.
- 2. Tariffs.** Levy taxes on all goods that pass through the territories under his control, bringing in vast revenue.
- 3. Occupation.** Fortified garrisons and chariot cities strategically placed to protect Israel and Judah.

Unmatched Wisdom (1 Kings 4:29-31, 34)

## 2.6 Solomon's Proverbs, Songs, and Writings (1 Kings 4:32-33)

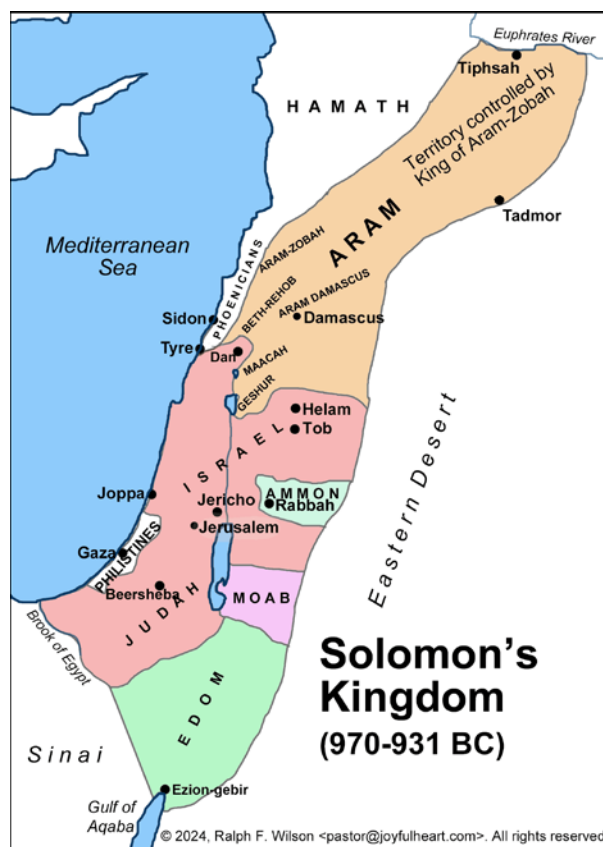
- Solomon's Love of Natural History (1 Kings 4:33)
- Proverbs of Solomon (Psalm 4:32a; Proverbs chapters 10:1 to 22:16, and 25 to 29)
- The Book of Ecclesiastes
- Solomon's Songs (1 Kings 4:32b; Psalms 72 and 127; and Song of Solomon)

**Q8. How have the writings attributed to Solomon affected your understanding, perspective, and way of life? In what ways?**

**Which proverbs have you committed to memory? Which of these is most dear to you?**



Solomon's 12 Administrative Districts



Solomon's Kingdom (970-931 BC) Shows Dan and Beersheba, traditional north and south cities of Israel.

## 2.7 God's Gifting

### "Natural" Talents and "Spiritual" Gifts

The Parable of the Talents (Matthew 25:14-30; Luke 12:48)

**Q9. (1 Kings 2:12; Matthew 25:14-30) What "natural" talent(s) do you have? What are you good at in the natural world? How are you using these talents for God and his Kingdom? Have you identified any "spiritual" gifts? How are you using those? Have you found that your "natural" talents are related to your "spiritual" gifts? If so, describe how they relate to each other.**

### Lessons for Disciples

God's gifts to Solomon of wisdom, riches, and honor have lots to teach us about how to understand how God has gifted us. Some of the lessons of 1 Kings 3 and 4 include:

1. Solomon's lesser sins of intermarriage with foreign wives and worshiping on the high places, lead to the greater sin of apostasy when he is older (1 Kings 3:1-4).
2. When Solomon sacrifices at Gibeon and God appears to him in a dream, he is a devout follower of Yahweh, loving God and loved by God, desiring to lead God's people with wisdom (1 Kings 3:6-9).
3. Solomon's request for wisdom to govern God's people pleases God, because it is not selfish, but displays love and a desire to serve (1 Kings 3:6-9). It shows singleness of heart.
4. God gives Solomon gifts he does not ask for. Most of the gifts we have received from God come unasked for (1 Kings 3:11-15a).
5. "Wisdom" in Hebrew covers a broad scope of wise conduct, moral insight, intellect, skill, craftsmanship, battle tactics, governing, shrewdness, and prudence.
6. In determining which of the women is the live child's mother, Solomon demonstrates judicial wisdom (1 Kings 3:16-28).
7. Many of the proverbs indicate Solomon's convictions concerning impartial administration of justice.
8. Psalm 72, attributed to Solomon, promotes helping the poor and disadvantaged (Psalm 72:1-4, 12-14).
9. The structure of Solomon's cabinet and tax districts reveals administrative wisdom (1 Kings 4:1-19).
10. Solomon's wisdom includes a focus on natural history, as well as writing proverbs, songs, and psalms. The Books of Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Song of Solomon reflect his literary interest (1 Kings 4:32-33).
11. God's gifts to us include both natural abilities and spiritual power.
12. Jesus teaches in the Parable of the Talents that we are responsible to use wisely what God has given us (Matthew 25:14-30; Luke 12:48).



### 3. Building Solomon's Temple (1 Kings 5-7)

#### 3.1 Temple Site (2 Chronicles 3:1; Genesis 22:2)

#### 3.2 David's Preparations for the Temple (1 Kings 5; 1 Chronicles 22, 28, 29)

David Gives Solomon Plans for the New Temple (1 Chronicles 28)

Fundraising for the Temple (1 Chronicles 29:5-9)

"Everything comes from you, and we have given you only what comes from your hand." (1 Chronicles 29:14)

Partnership with Hiram, King of Tyre (1 Kings 5)

Phoenician Craftsmen (2 Chronicles 2:7)

Conscripted Labor (Corvée) from Israelites (1 Kings 5:13-14; 9:15; Jeremiah 22:13; 1 Kings 12:4)

"The institution of tribute or corvée involves involuntary, unpaid labor or other service for a superior power — a feudal lord, a king, or a foreign ruler."

Forced Labor from Non-Israelites (1 Kings 5:15-16; 2 Chronicles 2:17-18; 8:7-9a)

#### 3.3 Solomon Builds the Temple (1 Kings 6; 2 Chronicles 3)

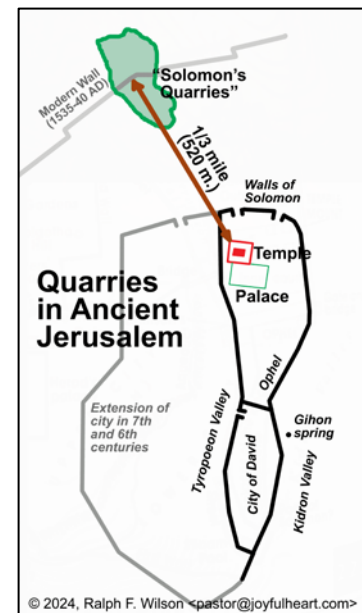
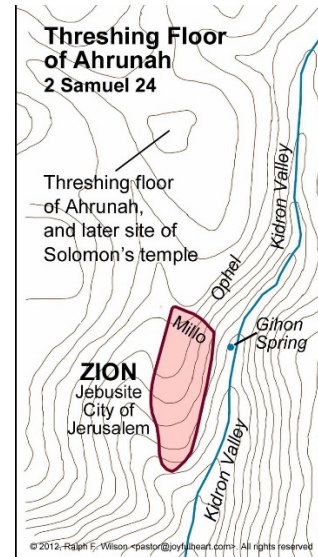
Quarrying White Limestone (1 Kings 6:7)

"The stonemasons normally sought cracks running along the grain of the rock and enlarged them by driving in wedges, often of wood, at regularly spaced intervals until a length of stone broke away. Once such a block had been dislodged, it was subdivided by the drilling of holes in a straight line and then split by other wedges. Freshly quarried rock is softer than rock that has been exposed to the air for some time and is therefore not as difficult for the stonemasons to remove and shape."

Temple Description (1 Kings 6)

A cubit is the length of a man's forearm from the elbow to the middle finger, standardized from time to time. We estimate one cubit as about 18 inches or 1.5 feet (about 46 centimeters). dimensions are:

	Tabernacle in the Wilderness	Solomon's Temple
Sanctuary length	45 feet (13.7 m)	90 feet (27.6 m)
Sanctuary width	15 feet (4.7 m)	45 feet (13.8 m)
Sanctuary height	15 feet (4.7 m)	45 feet (13.8 m)
Porch length		15 feet (4.6 m).
Porch height		unknown
Pillar height (incl. capitals)		34.5 feet (10.5 m)



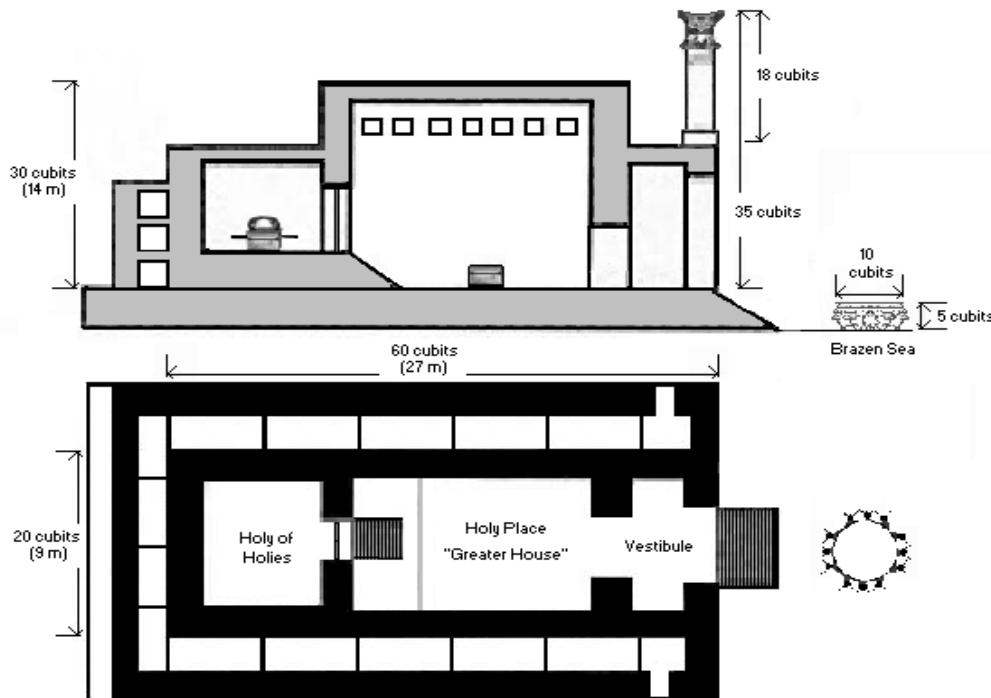
Solomon's Temple has four parts:

1. Holy Place, "main hall," or "nave."
2. Holy of Holies, "inner sanctuary"
3. Portico or entry area in front of the main building.
4. Storage rooms surrounding the main building.



Solomon's Temple (Steven's reconstruction), drawn from specifications prepared by W. F. Albright and G. Ernest Wright. G. Ernest Wright, *Biblical Archaeology* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1957).

Promise of God's Presence (1 Kings 6:11-14)



Solomon's Temple. Illustration appeared in WikiCommons, of unknown origin. GNU Free Documentation License, Version 1.2.

Temple Decorations (1 Kings 6:15-35; 2 Chronicles 3:4b-17; Psalm 96:6)

Temple Courtyards

1. Great court (1 Kings 7:12) that surrounded the temple and royal buildings, made with doors of bronze (2 Chronicles 4:9).
2. Middle Court (2 Kings 20:4; 1 Kings 7:8), a kind of court for the palace; and
3. Inner Court (1 Kings 6:36; Jeremiah 36:10), also known as the courtyard of the priests (2 Chronicles 4:9).

### 3.4 Temple's Furnishings (1 Kings 7:13-51; 2 Chronicles 4:1-5:1)

God Dwells in Awesome Glory (Revelation 21)

Church Buildings and Solomon's Temple

1. Should the church building be grand and glorious to point people to God? Or

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2. Should it be functional in order to save money for the mission of the church?

**Q10. How do church buildings relate to the central mission of the Church? What is the place of building worship buildings (such as Solomon's Temple) that express the beauty and glory of God? What is the place of building functional houses of worship that conserve resources for other tasks?**

### **3.5 The Temple Sacrifices and Worship (1 Chronicles 15:16; 2 Chronicles 8:12-14)**

Prayers and Songs

Typical Cycle of Temple Sacrifices (2 Chronicles 2:4; 13:11)

1. **Burning fragrant incense** (Exodus 30:1-10, 35-37; Luke 1:8-23). In Jesus' day, about half a pound of incense is used every morning and every evening. (Revelation 5:8; 8:3-4; Psalm 141:2)
2. **Setting out consecrated bread regularly** (Leviticus 24:4-9).
3. **Morning and Evening Burnt Offerings** (Exodus 28:38-39; Numbers 28:1-8).
4. **Sabbath Sacrifices** (Numbers 28:9-10):
5. **New Moon Sacrifices** (Numbers 28:11-15).
6. **Annual appointed feasts** (2 Chronicles 8:12-13)
  - a. **Feast of Passover and Unleavened Bread** celebrates the Exodus and is connected with the barley harvest.
  - b. **Feast of Harvest**, sometimes called the **Feast of Weeks or Pentecost** (in the New Testament) celebrates the wheat harvest, seven weeks following Passover.
  - c. **Feast of Ingathering or Feast of Tabernacles or Booths** is a general harvest festival in the fall.

Repentance Is Necessary with Sacrifices (Isaiah 1:11,13, 15b-17; 1 John 2:1-2)

### **3.6 Temples and Sacrifices for New Testament Disciples (Hebrews 10:11-14; (John 1:29)**

**Q11. How does an understanding of Old Testament sacrifice help us understand Jesus' death on the cross?**

Temples in the Era of the Spirit (1 Corinthians 6:19-20; 3:16-17; Ephesians 2:22; 1 Peter 2:4-5)

Offerings and Sacrifices in the Era of the Spirit

These "spiritual sacrifices" today are exclusively confined to what we offer to God from the heart. Just what kinds of offerings do we offer to God? Here is a helpful though incomplete list.

1. **Loving God and loving our neighbor** (Mark 12:33; Hebrews 13:16)
2. **Lives surrendered to God in obedience** (Romans 12:1; Psalm 19:14)
3. **Financial Gifts** (Philippians 4:18)
4. **Proclaiming the gospel** (Romans 15:16).
5. **Praise** (Hebrews 13:15; quoting Hosea 14:2)
6. **Prayers** (Acts 10:4; Revelation 5:8; 8:4; Psalm 141:2).
7. **Alms, gifts for the poor** (Acts 10:4).

**Q12. Should worship be a "sacrifice" for us in the sense that it costs us something in time, effort, or focus? Which of the New Testament forms of "sacrifice" and "offerings" are most meaningful for you? Which are most difficult for you?**

## Lessons for Disciples

Solomon's Temple offers lessons at several levels. Here are but a few lessons we can learn from it.

1. David's preparations for the temple stockpiled all sorts of materials, encouraged others to give towards the project, and set an expectation for success (1 Chronicles 22, 28, 29). Our preparations for future ministry are necessary, even if we won't get the credit for it.
2. David prays, "**Everything comes from you, and we have given you only what comes from your hand.**" (1 Chronicles 29:14b). That teaches us that our possessions and resources are God's, not ours.
3. The main purpose of Solomon's Temple was to provide a holy place for God to dwell in the midst of his people (1 Kings 6:13), even though it could not contain him. In a similar way, our bodies are to be temples, dwelling places of the Holy Spirit.
4. The Temple was designed to be beautiful and splendid, as would befitting of God's House (Psalm 96:6). God's dwelling place in heaven is even more glorious (Revelation 21).
5. Church buildings can be inexpensive and functional at the beginning, but can attempt to reflect something of God's glory when the congregation can afford it. However, the Church's central mission is in reaching the lost, not in building splendid churches.
6. Singing worship abounded in the Temple (2 Chronicles 8:14) as it should in our churches.
7. Various kinds of sacrifices were offered in the temple, for atonement as well as for celebration and fellowship. Since Christ's death on the cross as a sacrifice for our sins, animal sacrifices for atonement are obsolete (Hebrews 10:11-14).
8. Rather than offer animal sacrifices, Christians now offer spiritual worship, such as: love and good works, surrendered and obedient lives, financial gifts, proclaiming the gospel, praise, prayers, and alms for the poor.

## 4. Dedicating Solomon's Temple (1 Kings 8-9)

### 4.1 Ark Is Brought into the Temple (1 Kings 8:1-11; 2 Chronicles 5:2-14)

Journey to the Temple Site (1 Kings 8:3-5; 2 Chronicles 5:4-6)

Placement in the Holy of Holies (1 Kings 8:6-9; 2 Chronicles 5:7-13)

The Glory of the Lord Appears (1 Kings 8:10-11; 2 Chronicles 5:12-13)

### 4.2 Dedication of the Temple (1 Kings 8:12-66; 2 Chronicles 6:1-7:22)

A House for My Name (1 Kings 8:15-19; 2 Chronicles 6:4-11)

"Name" (*shēm*) appears in 1 Kings 8, verses 16, 17, 18, 19, and 20, underscoring the importance of God's Name in this context. Here "name" carries both the idea of the revealed Name of Yahweh (Exodus 3:14-15), as well as the ideas of his ownership, possession, and protection.

Solomon's Prayer of Dedication (1 Kings 8:22-53; 2 Chronicles 6:12-42)

**Q13. (1 Kings 8:15-16, 27-30) Why is it so important that the Israelites understand that God doesn't live solely in Solomon's Temple. Where else is God's dwelling place? (verses 27, 30). If the temple isn't God's sole dwelling place, what then is the importance of the temple? Is it wrong to go to a sacred building such as a church to do your praying? Why or why not?**

Prayers Directed toward the Temple (1 Kings 8:30a)

Prayers for Mercy (1 Kings 8:30b-51; 2 Chronicles 6:19-42)

Solomon Blesses the People (1 Kings 8:54-61)

Fire Falls and Consumes the Sacrifices (2 Chronicles 7:1-3)

This is one of only a handful of times in Scripture where the fire falls to consume a sacrifice offered by mere humans (Genesis 15:17; Leviticus 9:24; Judges 6:21; Kings 18:24, 38); 1 Chronicles 21:26; Exodus 29:43; Acts 2:3-4a; 2 Corinthians 3:18) .

**Q14. (1 Kings 8:10-11; 2 Chronicles 7:1-3; 2 Corinthians 3:18) What does the cloud that filled the temple represent? What do God's glory filling the temple and fire falling on the sacrifice represent? In what sense can we "behold the glory of the Lord" today? How? Why should we take time for that?**

Offering Sacrifices (1 Kings 8:62-64; 2 Chronicles 7:4-7)

A fellowship offering, peace offering, or thank offering is a more celebratory offering. With this offering, only the fatty portions are burned on the altar, the priests receive a portion, and the rest is eaten by the worshippers (Leviticus 7:28-34; 10:14-15).

### 4.3 Second Appearance to Solomon (1 Kings 9:1-9; 2 Chronicles 7:11-22)

Confirming the Davidic Covenant (1 Kings 9:4-5)

God calls Solomon to: (1) integrity of heart, (2) uprightness, and (3) obedience.

**1. "Integrity of heart"** uses the noun *tōm*, "integrity," from a verb with the fundamental idea of completeness. Thus, a heart of integrity is a heart that is single, whole, united in one purpose, "whole-hearted" (Matthew 6:22-23, KJV; Kings 8:21; James 1:8; 4:8).

**2. "Uprightness"** is *yōsher*, "uprightness, straightness," from the verb *yāshar*, "be level, straight, (up) right, just, lawful." "Make straight in the desert a highway for our God." (Isaiah 40:3)

**3. Obedience.** God directs that Solomon must not become a law unto himself (John 14:15; 15:14).

The Requirement of Faithfulness and Obedience

Temples vs. Hearts

**Q15. (1 Kings 9:4–5) What kind of “walk” does God call Solomon to? What does this kind of lifestyle look like? What obstacles does a believer face in seeking to walk before God in this way? What is the opposite of integrity of heart?**

#### 4.4 “If my people....” (2 Chronicles 7:13-15)

“If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land.” (2 Chronicles 7:14)

Context: Times of National Threat (2 Chronicles 7:13)

Addressee: My People (2 Chronicles 7:14a)

“If my people, who are called by my name.” “Called by my name.” “Called” in this context can suggest ownership or sovereignty over. In this text, “my people” refers directly to Israel. However, by extension, we might apply the promise to any people-group that had largely turned to the Lord, but has fallen away.

Conditions (2 Chronicles 7:14b)

1. **Humbling Ourselves.** A *voluntary humbling*, not being humbled by outside forces such as disgrace or defeat (James 4:10; 1 Peter 5:6; Matthew 23:12; cf. Luke 14:11; 18:14). How did people humble themselves in Bible days? They include: Bowing low; prostrating oneself; fasting; tearing one’s clothes; wearing sackcloth and ashes, beating one’s breast; confession and acknowledgement of one’s sins with repentance; correcting injustice; weeping; mourning; considering others better than oneself; deliberately taking the lower place; serving others; and giving thanks.
2. **Praying.** We are required to come before God, to ask, to petition him for his judgment and intervention in the situation. Prayer changes things.
3. **Seeking God’s Face.** “Seek” connotes earnest looking for something. “Face” is a literal way of referring to one’s person or presence (Numbers 6:24-26; Genesis 32:30; Exodus 33:11a). The expression “seek the face of” in the context of a human ruler means “to seek an audience with” (Deuteronomy 4:29).
4. **Turning from Our Wicked Ways.** “Turn” is the very common verb *shûb*, implying physical motion or movement. “Way, path road,” refers to the path that is worn by constant walking, figuratively, one’s habitual way or manner of life – one’s values, actions, lifestyle.

God’s Response to Prayer and Repentance (2 Chronicles 7:14c)

1. “Hear from heaven.”
2. “Forgive their sin.”
3. “Heal their land.” Heal here is used in the metaphorical sense, to deliver them from calamity and what endangers them. Land speaks of the territory or land of Israel that might be threatened in the future by a calamity sent by God.

Revival in the Scripture (Joel 2:12-13; Hosea 6:1; Psalm 85:6; 2 Kings 18-20; 2 Kings 22-23; 1 Kings 17-18; Ezra 7-10).

Daniel's Prayer of Intercession for His People (Daniel 9:1-23)

Ideally, the whole nation must repent. But that usually begins with one person, or a small group, humbling themselves and pleading for widespread repentance and revival, and confessing the sins of the nation.

The Modern History of Revivals

Action by even a few earnest believers can be the catalyst that brings about a mighty move of God.

**Q16. (2 Chronicles 7:13-14; Daniel 9:3-16) In what ways does Daniel's prayer exemplify the conditions for God's healing? What must God's people do to experience renewal and revival today? What conditions must be true in our hearts? How might God's healing show itself in a person? In a congregation? In a region? In a nation? Why is a Holy Spirit-sent revival so important in our day?**

**4.5 Temple Worship under Solomon (1 Kings 9:25; 2 Chronicles 9:14-15)**

**4.6 Solomon's Devotion (Ecclesiastes 2:24-25; 2 Samuel 12:24b-25; 1 Kings 3:3; 2 Chronicles 30:26; Nehemiah 13:26b).**

**Q17. (2 Samuel 12:24b-25; 1 Kings 3:3) At Solomon's finest, what does his devotion to God look like? Can you think of anyone else in Scripture who is loved by God and loves God back? (Hint: 1 John 4:19) Yet, Solomon's life is a cautionary tale for believers. Why?**

Lessons for Disciples

This chapter contains many lessons for disciples to ponder.

1. Moving the ark to the Holy of Holies or innermost sanctuary, is symbolic of placing the throne of the King in his dwelling in the new temple (1 Kings 8:6-9).
2. The glory of God appears twice in the newly-dedicated temple, signifying God's presence in this house built for him (1 Kings 8:10-11), and in fire falling upon the sacrifices to consume them (2 Chronicles 7:1-2).
3. The temple is "a house for Yahweh's name," meaning that Yahweh is the resident, owner, and guardian of the sanctuary (1 Kings 8:15-19).
4. Solomon's posture in prayer is kneeling and spreading out his hands toward heaven (2 Chronicles 6:13).
5. Solomon recognizes that God is too big to dwell in an earthly temple, even in highest heaven (1 Kings 8:27). God is incomparable, trustworthy, and transcendent.
6. Solomon asks that God hear prayers made while facing the temple, his earthly home (1 Kings 8:30b-51).
7. Solomon's blessing of the people calls on God to be with them and turn hearts to him, and challenges the people to be wholly committed to obeying him (1 Kings 8:57-61).
8. Solomon sacrifices thousands of fellowship offerings to honor Yahweh and provide food for the people who have gathered (1 Kings 8:62-64).
9. Yahweh appears a second time to Solomon to assure him of his presence in the temple, and call Solomon to be obedient to him, in keeping the with Davidic Covenant (1 Kings 9:4-5)

10. Yahweh makes a promise to God's people who experience his punishment. If they will humble themselves, pray, seek him diligently, and repent, then he will hear, forgive, and heal their land. The promise also has application to nations once Christian that have fallen away (2 Chronicles 7:13-15).
11. A history of revivals shows us that even a small group of committed intercessors can be used as a catalyst to bring a great Holy Spirit revival.
12. The cycle of temple worship under Solomon involves daily prayers, sacrifices, and sung worship as well as monthly times, and special festivals (1 Kings 9:25; 2 Chronicles 6:32; 8:13; 9:14-15).
13. Solomon is clearly a greatly gifted king who is loved by God and devoted to God in the earlier parts of his reign (2 Samuel 12:24-25; 1 Kings 3:3; Nehemiah 13:26).



## 5. Solomon's Splendor (1 Kings 9-10)

"Moreover, I will give you what you have not asked for — both riches and honor—so that in your lifetime you will have no equal among kings." (1 Kings 3:13)

### 5.1 Palaces (1 Kings 7:1-12)

Solomon's Palace (1 Kings 7:1-12)

1. **The Palace of the Forest of Lebanon** where he and perhaps his harem live.
2. **A covered colonnade**
3. **The Throne Hall, the Hall of Justice** where Solomon holds court, governs.
4. **Palace for Pharaoh's daughter**, his chief wife.

Palace for Solomon's Wife, Daughter of Pharaoh (1 Kings 7:8b)

### 5.2 Solomon's Other Building Projects (1 Kings 9:10-28; 2 Chronicles 9:10-18)

Construction of Jerusalem's Wall and Repair of the Millo

"Supporting terraces" (NIV), "Millo" (ESV, NRSV, KJV) is the noun *millô*, "filled, mound, rampart," something that fills a gap or hole, from the verb *mālê*, "to fill."

Border Villages Given to Hiram (2 Chronicles 9:10; 1 Kings 9:11-14)

The Philistine City of Gezer (1 King 9:16-17a)

Fortified Cities and Store Cities (1 Kings 9:15, 17-19; 2 Chronicles 8:3-6)

**Hazor** protects from attack from the north.

**Megiddo** defends from the west, the road from Phoenicia through the Carmel Valley.

**Hamath Zobah**.

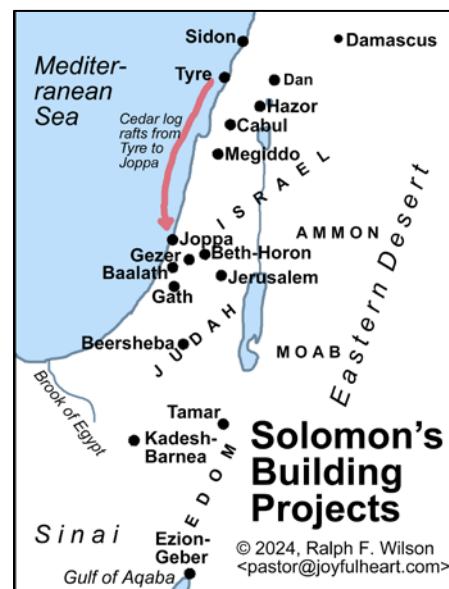
**Beth Horon** guarding from the plain into central Judea.

**Baalath**, store-city.

**Tamar** in the Negev desert south of the Dead Sea.

**Chariot cities** (1 Kings 9:19; 2 Chronicles 8:6; 1 Kings 10:28-29)

**Q18. Which of Solomon's building projects are designed to glorify Yahweh? Which are designed to glorify Solomon? Which are designed to provide protection and security for his people? Many of God's people are in day-to-day provision mode, but if God has given you a**



bit of disposable income, which of your primary financial outlays are designed to honor God? Which are designed to serve others?

### 5.3 Ships and Trade (1 Kings 9:26-28; 2 Chronicles 8:17-18)

#### 5.4 Queen of Sheba Visits Solomon (1 Kings 10:1-13; 2 Chronicles 9:1-12)

One Greater than Solomon (Luke 11:31)

The Wisdom of Jesus (1 Corinthians 1:30; 2:10-16; Colossians 2:2b-4; Proverbs 9:10; James 1:5)

**Q19. (Luke 11:31; 1 Corinthians 1:30; Colossians 2:2)**  
How does Jesus' wisdom contrast with worldly wisdom? In what sense are "all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge" hidden in Him? Just how do you go about becoming "wise" in Jesus?



### 5.5 Solomon's Splendor (1 Kings 10:14-29; 2 Chronicles 9:13-28)

Solomon's Gold Tribute and Revenue (1 Kings 10:14-17; 2 Chronicles 9:13-20)

The talent, a basic weight of gold or silver, was the largest measure in use before the introduction of coins. The Babylonian talent that was probably used in ancient Israel weighed 129 pounds (58.9 kg).<sup>1</sup> Thus, 666 talents, Solomon's annual tribute, would have weighed 85,914 pounds (about 43 tons; 38,970 kg). In January 2024, the price of gold was about \$2,000 USD per ounce, making the present-day monetary value of Solomon's annual tribute about \$2.7 trillion USD.



<sup>1</sup> Wikipedia article, "Talent (measurement)."

### Solomon's Great Throne (1 Kings 10:18-20)

The Throne of God (Isaiah 6:1; Isaiah 66:1; cf. Matthew 5:34; Acts 7:49; Ezekiel 10:1; Matthew 25:3; Hebrews 4:16; 8:1; 12:2; Revelation 4:2-6; 7:17; 20:11-12; 22:1, 3)

The chariot is considered the premier war machine of Solomon's time, extremely useful in valleys and plains, if not on the difficult roads through the Judean hills (Judges 1:19). Israel had been late to adopt them, but Solomon acquires chariots and horses on a large scale and builds cities to accommodate them (1 Kings 4:26; 10:26, 10:28-29; Deuteronomy 17:16-17)

Summary of Solomon's Wealth and Power (1 Kings 10:21-25)

The Wealth and Glory of the Nations (Psalm 72:8-11, 15; Isaiah 60:11; Revelation 21:24-26)

## 5.6 A New Covenant View of Wealth and Honor

Caring for the Poor, Almsgiving (Deuteronomy 15:7-8; Proverbs 19:17; 22:9; 28:27; Isaiah 58:6-7; Matthew 6:2-4; 25:40)

**Q20. (Proverbs 19:17; 22:9) Why is giving to help the poor so basic a practice in Judaism and Christianity? Why are we sometimes hesitant to help the poor we see in our streets? What are some wise ways by which we can make a regular practice of giving to help the poor?**

Humility and the Prosperity Gospel (Matthew 11:28-30; 6:25-34; Luke 12:48)

See my "Brief Critique of the Prosperity Message."

<https://www.jesuswalk.com/2corinthians/prosperity-message.htm>

A New Testament View of Wealth (1 Timothy 6:9-10a; 17-19; Matthew 6:28-30, 33; cf. Luke 12:27-28, 31)

**Q21. (1 Kings 10:18-25; 1 Timothy 2:9-10; 6:6-10, 17-19). Solomon is both rich and showy. In Paul's letter to Timothy at Ephesus, what kinds of guidelines are given for avoiding ostentation and flaunting wealth? What should the wealthy do to please God? 1 Timothy 6:17 indicates a connection between wealth and arrogance. How can wealth breed arrogance?**

### Lessons for Disciples

1. Solomon's wealth and honor are clearly bestowed on him by God (1 Kings 3:13).
2. Solomon serves his people by building up the defenses of Jerusalem and many outlying cities to protect Israel's homeland (1 Kings 9:10-28).
3. Solomon gains wealth from tributes of vassal nations, tariffs on trade, and from the profit of his trading ventures with the Phoenicians (1 Kings 9:26-28; 10:14-15).
4. The Queen of Sheba visits Solomon to learn from his wisdom (1 Kings 10:1-13). Jesus refers to it by saying of himself, "one greater than Solomon is here" (Luke 11:31). Jesus' wisdom is often paradoxical, counter to the world's wisdom. Christ is our wisdom (1 Corinthians 1:30; Colossians 2:2).
5. Solomon's high throne of gold and ivory was impressive (1 Kings 10:18-20), but it is nothing compared to God's throne in heaven (Revelation 4:2-6; 20:12; 22:1, 3).
6. In spite of God's blessing to Solomon, Deuteronomy 17:16-17 warns against kings acquiring horses, wives, and wealth. Great wealth comes with temptations.

7. The Prosperity Gospel sees poverty as a curse and prosperity as a blessing. But Jesus teaches us not to focus on wealth or possessions, but to seek the Kingdom of God (Matthew 6:28-33). From those who have been given much, much is required (Luke 12:48).
8. The Bible teaches almsgiving as a consistent practice, as does Solomon in the Book of Proverbs.
9. Paul warns the rich against arrogance and putting their hope or trust in wealth. Rather, we are to seek to be “rich in good deeds,” be generous, and to share (1 Timothy 6:17-19).

## 6. Solomon's Legacy (1 Kings 11)

### Accounts of Solomon's Sins and Weaknesses

We learn about Solomon's sins only in 1 Kings, not in 2 Chronicles, which omits any mention of his sin. David's sin with Bathsheba isn't mentioned in 1 Chronicles either. The Chronicler expects the reader to be familiar with 1 and 2 Samuel and 1 and 2 Kings, but is making different emphases in his inspired account.

### 6.1 Solomon's Foreign Wives and Idolatry (1 Kings 11:1-8)

#### Solomon the Womanizer (1 Kings 11:1-3)

*'Ahēb*, "love, like, be in love" has a wide range of meaning, in the same way "love" has in English. Alden tells us about the Hebrew verb: "The intensity of the meaning ranges from God's infinite affection for his people to the carnal appetites of a lazy glutton." The verb is used of adulterous relations, of marital love, of love of a father for a son, of love one's neighbor as oneself, of love for God, and all in between. You can take "love" in 1 Kings 11:1 in several ways, but as I read it, I see a man driven by a voracious sexual appetite or a vain man trying to appear virile to his subjects.

#### Husband and Father (Deuteronomy 17:16-17)

**Q22. (1 Kings 11:3) Is it fair to conclude that Solomon is a womanizer who lusts after women? How does a womanizer treat a wife? How does having a womanizer for a father affect the children? Is sexual excess compatible with Christian discipleship?**

#### Commands against Intermarriage and Idolatry (Deuteronomy 7:5-6; 1 Kings 2:1-2)

#### Solomon's Sin of Idolatry (1 Kings 11:4-6)

1. "You shall have **no other gods** before me.
2. You shall not make for yourself an **idol** in the form of anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters below. <sup>5</sup>You shall **not bow down to them or worship them**; for I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God...." (Exodus 20:3-5)

#### Five Tragic Truths about Solomon (1 Kings 11:4-8)

**1. "Turned away his heart after other gods."** Solomon had once "shown his love for Yahweh" by following God's commands (1 Kings 3:3). But his heart, once steadfast for Yahweh whose temple he builds, now turns away, changed. "Turned" (NIV), "turned away" (ESV, NRSV, KJV) is the Hiphil of *nātā*, here figuratively, one's heart may "turn away" (that is, shift its loyalty, apostatize). (Matthew 6:24; Luke 14:26)



2. **“Not fully devoted to Yahweh his God.”** “Not fully devoted” (NIV), “not wholly true” (ESV), “not true” (NRSV), “not perfect” (KJV) is a word related to Shalom, “peace, wholeness.” The Hebrew adjective is *shālēm*, “perfect, whole, full,” that is, “undivided.” “Followed” other gods. To “follow” or “go after” other gods, as Solomon has done, means to apostatize, to turn away from Yahweh as the one true God, from monotheism to polytheism, or, perhaps, syncretism

**Ashtoreth, Asherah or Astarte** is the name of a major fertility goddess whose worship was widely spread throughout Syria and Canaan. Asherah is the consort of the male god Baal. Often, a Canaanite high place would have an altar to the god Baal and an Asherah pole for the worship of the goddess, such as the ones God instructed Gideon to cut down. In Babylon, this goddess is known as Ishtar.

**Molech** is the national deity of the Ammonite, with child sacrifices by fire.

**Chemosh** is the national deity of Moab with Human sacrifices were offered to this god (2 Kings 3:27). Both Chemosh and Molech seem to be local manifestations of the astral deity, the Venus star, Athtar.

4. **“Did evil”** (verse 6)

5. **“Built a high place”** (verse 7; 2 Kings 23:13-14). Pagan cultic locations were usually located on natural heights. A high place (*bāmā*) or cultic platform would typically have an idol, an Asherah pole, perhaps one or more stone pillars or standing stones to symbolize the male deity, and a stone altar.

Yahweh Appears to Solomon a Third Time (1 Kings 11:9-10)

Yahweh’s Rebuke of Solomon (1 Kings 11:11-13)

1. **Replacement.** The kingdom ruled by the House of David will be torn away and given to another – Jeroboam (11:28).

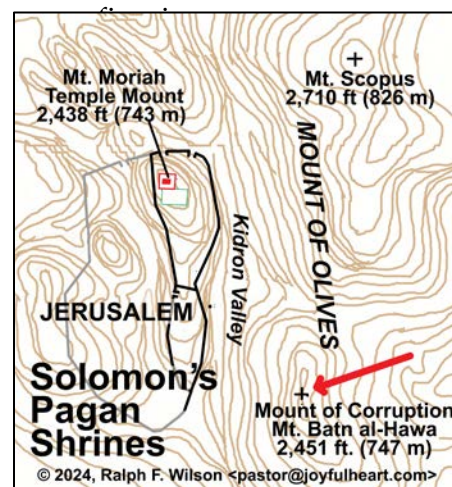
2. **Timing.** Punishment will place after Solomon’s death

3. **Mitigation.** The tearing away will not be complete, but Solomon’s sons will henceforth rule over only the tribe of Judah.

Solomon’s son Rehoboam retains kingship over the tribe of Judah is important for two reasons: (1) it fulfills the promise of the Davidic Covenant that a son of David will always have the throne; and (2) it protects Jerusalem, the center of Yahweh worship, from the gross idolatry that rapidly takes over the northern kingdom that splits off.



Ashtoreth (Asherah), clay



## 6.2 Solomon's Adversaries (1 Kings 11:14-40)

Rebellion in Edom and Syria (1 Kings 11:12-25)

Jeroboam Son of Nebat (1 Kings 11:26-40)

Ahijah the Prophet (1 Kings 11:29-30)

The rebellious tribes nominally include all the 12 tribes except Judah and Benjamin (2 Chronicles 11:12). In practice, many of the priests and Levites also immigrate to Judah so they can participate in temple worship (2 Chronicles 11:13-15; 15:9). So do other loyal worshippers of Yahweh (2 Chronicles 11:16; 15:9).

Yahweh's Stunning Offer to Jeroboam (1 Kings 11:37-39)

## 6.3 Solomon's Death and Heir (1 Kings 11:41-43; 2 Chronicles 9:29-31; Psalm 90:10)

## 6.4 Dispersal of What Solomon Had Built

1. **Disappearance of Solomon's Wisdom** (1 Kings 12:1-15). Rehoboam consults with his father's counselors, selected by Solomon for their wisdom, and they counsel lightening the requirement. Then Rehoboam asks his friends, the young men he has grown up with, who advise a show of strength and defiance in the face of the northern tribes' demands.
2. **Dissolution of the Kingdom** (1 Kings 12:16, 24)
3. **Loss of Regional Domination**
4. **Seizure of Solomon's Wealth** (1 Kings 14:25-27) by Egypt.
5. **Desecration of Solomon's Pagan Shrines** (1 Kings 14:22-24; 2 Kings 23:13), 300 years later.
6. **Destruction of Solomon's Temple** (587 BC; 2 Kings 24:13). This Second Temple is extensively remodeled by Herod the Great (reigned 40 to 4 BC). This is where Jesus, Solomon's descendant (Matthew 1:6-7), teaches in "Solomon's Colonnade," a covered porch named in memory of Solomon (John 10:23; Acts 3:11; 5:12).

## Solomon's Legacy and Our Own

### Solomon's Strengths and Achievements

Solomon is greatly gifted and blessed.

1. God chooses Solomon to be king.
2. Solomon loves God and walks in David's statues.
3. Solomon is extremely intelligent, a genius of sorts.
4. Solomon follows a successful monarch and builds on David's successes.
5. Solomon builds the Temple.
6. Solomon supports and codifies temple worship.
7. Solomon is a man of prayer.
8. Solomon reforms government.
9. Solomon increases Israel's prominence in international affairs.
10. Solomon enjoys trading successes.
11. Solomon supports justice in courts. Though he gains a personal reputation for justice with his famed decision



Divided Kingdom under Rehoboam (931 BC)

about which woman is the true mother of the living child, Solomon insists upon justice and sets up courts that exercise the rule of law throughout Israel (Lesson 2.4).

12. Solomon takes special care for the needy in his kingdom.
13. Solomon strengthens Israel's defenses.
14. Solomon enjoys peace during his reign.
15. Solomon accumulates fabulous wealth.
16. Solomon curates and writes proverbs and Wisdom Literature.
17. Solomon serves as a "poster boy" for Yahweh in the Middle East.

**Q23. From the list above, which do you think are Solomon's five or six greatest strengths and accomplishments? Why is Solomon so gifted?**

#### Solomon's Weaknesses and Sins

1. **Solomon worships on the High Places** (1 Kings 3:3)
2. **Solomon is a womanizer with an excessive number of wives and concubines.**

(Deuteronomy 17:17).

3. **Solomon accumulates unsustainable family and bureaucratic expenses** (1 Kings 4:7).
4. **Solomon accumulates excessive wealth** (Deuteronomy 17:17)
5. **Solomon seems to favor his own tribe at the expense of the others.**
6. **Fatherhood.**
7. **Idolatry.**

#### Solomon's Fatal Flaw - Idolatry (Ezekiel 18:24; 2 Samuel 7:14-15)

**Q24. Of the list of 7 of Solomon's weaknesses, which two or three do you think are most damaging. Why does persistent sin ruin such an accumulation of good works that Solomon did?**

Drifting (Hebrews 2:1; Revelation 2:4; 3:16-17)

**Q25. (Hebrews 2:1) Why is gradual drifting more dangerous than suddenly giving in to a temptation? How can you protect yourself from drifting away from the Lord?**

### **6.6 Solomon's Descendant Is Jesus the Messiah (Matthew 1:6b-7, 16; Hebrews 4:15; 1 John 2:1-2; Luke 11:31; cf. Matthew 12:42; Mark 6:2; 1 Corinthians 1:30; Colossians 2:3)**

#### Lessons for Disciples

As we assess Solomon's life, we see many lessons for followers of the Lord.

1. Solomon's extremely large harem seems to indicate that he is driven by a large sexual appetite, rather than just a desire to show power, wealth, and make marriage alliances (1 Kings 11:3).
2. Solomon's huge harem means that he cannot be a true husband to any of his wives or father to his children.
3. Solomon breaks the commandments that prohibit intermarriage with non-believers (Deuteronomy 7:5-6; 1 Kings 2:1-2).



4. Solomon is faithful to God early in his reign, but when he is older, he builds shrines for his wife's pagan gods and "follows" them, making him a polytheist in disobedience to the 10 Commandments (1 Kings 11:4-8; Ex 20:3-5).
5. A desire to please his wives turns Solomon away from wholehearted, single-minded worship of the One God (1 Kings 11:4-5; Nehemiah 13:26; Matthew 6:24; Luke 14:26).
6. Solomon "did evil" in God's sight (1 Kings 11:6).
7. Solomon's sin in building pagan high places perpetuates idolatry in Jerusalem and the kingdom for the next 300 years (2 Kings 23:13-14). Our sins can affect those who follow us.
8. God rebukes Solomon for his idolatry, but mitigates the punishment by delaying it until after Solomon's death and leaving Judah two tribes (1 Kings 11:9-13).
9. God offers Jeroboam, Solomon's adversary, his own everlasting dynasty if he will follow Yahweh faithfully – though Jeroboam rejects it (1 Kg11:37-39).
10. The wisdom that characterizes Solomon's reign, the United Kingdom he has ruled, his regional domination, and his wealth do not survive for long after his death.
11. The pagan shrines Solomon builds are not destroyed for 300 years under King Josiah. Solomon's temple is destroyed after 372 years in 587 BC.
12. Solomon had many gifts, strengths, and achievements including: God's backing, love for God, wisdom, intelligence, regional dominance, building a temple, supporting and establishing temple worship, prayer, government reform, trading success, concern for justice and for the poor, peace, fabulous wealth, literary achievements in proverbs and songs, and serving as a visible representative of Yahweh's greatness in the Middle East.
13. Solomon's sins and weaknesses include worshiping on the high places, being a womanizer, accumulating unsustainable expenses for his family and bureaucracy, accumulating excessive wealth, favoring his own tribe at the expense of the others, being a poor father and husband, and worshiping false gods as a polytheist.
14. Solomon drifts gradually from being a faithful follower of Yahweh to becoming a polytheist (Hebrews 2:1).
15. Solomon's descendant Jesus the Messiah is the only one who is without sin (Matthew 1:6-7, 16; Hebrews 4:15; 2 Corinthians 5:21).
16. Jesus is the One who is greater than Solomon (Luke 11:31), and is our Wisdom (1 Corinthians 1:30; Colossians 2:3).