

**Single Kingdom Period:
The Reign of King Solomon *I Kings 1:1-11:43 & II Chronicles 1:1-9:31***

The kingdom that Solomon inherited was much different than the one David had inherited 40 years before. Israel was at its peak in power and influence when Solomon came to the throne. By contrast when David came to the throne the kingdom was divided, as you will recall. At its best was a loose knit nation and at its worst 12 individual tribes. Enemies, in contrast, did not oppress the kingdom of Solomon, nor was Solomon a man of war for most of his reign.

Solomon is noted for three things; his wisdom, his great wealth and the building of the temple. In some ways we can say that Solomon was a wise man who became very foolish.

Allow me to break his life down for us into five areas. Allow me to offer this outline.

- I- Solomon's Victory. *I Kings 1-2***
- II- Solomon's Wisdom. *I King 3***
- III- Solomon's Reign In Victory. *I Kings 4***
- IV- Solomon's Temple. *I Kings 5-8; II Chron 2-7***
- V- Solomon's Fame. *I Kings 4:29-34; 10:1-13***
- VI- Solomon's Failure. *I Kings 11.***

I- Solomon's Victory. *I Kings 1-2*

When a new ruler came to the throne in the Ancient East he would usually kill all of the potential rivals from the previous ruler. First Kings chapter one records for us that David's son Adonijah had assumed the throne of David before David was dead. When Nathan, the prophet, heard this he told Bathsheba to tell David. David knew that

Solomon was God's man to reign after him. There was a great potential for a civil war during this time of uncertainty.

I Kings 11:11-40 records the coronation of Solomon who would reign with power. There were men to deal with when Solomon came to reign. These were Adonijah, and those that had supported Adonijah; Joab, David's General and Abiathar, the priest. Before Solomon can reign in victory he must have victory over those who oppose him.

Solomon spared their lives if they submitted to his rule. He gave them rules to live by and as they rebelled they were killed except for Abiathar who was cast out of the priesthood.

Abiathar was a descendant of Eli and ***I Sam 2:31-36*** foretold this would happen. ***1 Kings 2:25*** records Adonijah's death. Adonijah enticed Bathsheba to request that Solomon allow him to marry one of David's concubines. Allow me to quote from *Gaebelein's Consise Commentary* to understand the significance of this.

"To marry a deceased king's wife or concubine was, according to Oriental customs, paramount with claiming the rights of the king."

1 Kings 2:34 records the death of Joab. There was also a man named Shimei who died when he failed to do as Solomon commanded him. Solomon told him he would allow him to live as long as he did not leave Jerusalem. (See ***2:436***) ***I Kings 2:46*** tells us that the kingdom was established. Solomon had victory over his enemies.

II- Solomon's Wisdom. *I King 3*

God appeared to Solomon in a dream at Gibeon as he sacrificed there. **3:5** God asked him what his hearts desire was. Solomon asked for wisdom to rule. **3:6-10** Because of this wise request God told him he would give him riches and honor **3:11-15**.

This new found wisdom is put to test immediately when two harlots brought a baby to Solomon and each claim it as their child. Solomon told his men to divide the baby and give each half knowing that the real mother would not allow this to happen even if it means giving the child to the other woman. He in his wisdom discerns the true mother. (see **1 Kings 3:16-28**)

III-Solomon's Reign In Victory. **I Kings 4.**

Solomon organized the kingdom with 12 officers over it. He did not strictly follow the tribal lines of division, which made Israel a nation and not just 12 tribes. His household and kingdom was one of great wealth and influence. The day to day operation was a massive task. Notice **4:22-23, 26**. Solomon reigned in peace and tranquillity. Israel was at it height of power during his reign. **4:24**.

IV- Solomon's Temple. I Kings 5-8; II Chron 2-7

The first temple that was built by the nation of Israel for God was called Solomon's Temple because he was the one who built it. This was common practice with all the temples.

1 Kings 5 records Hiram king of Tyre giving his service to the construction of the temple. **1 Kings 6** records the splendor of the temple. The place was under construction for seven years and was a work of art to behold. It

was richly decorated with gold and cedar. So precise were the parts of the building that the sound of a hammer or saw was not heard in the house. **6:7**. There were 150,000 workers that worked on the temple.

After the temple was finished the nation held a two week festival of celebration. They offered 22,000 oxen and 120,000 sheep during this time.

The Ark of the Covenant was brought to the temple. **1 Kings 8:1-4** and **2 Chron 2:5**. However, the most important thing that happened during this time was the Shekinah glory of the Lord that came to dwell in the temple. **1 Kings 8:10-11**.

V- Solomon's Fame. I Kings 4:29-34; 10:1-13

You will recall that God granted Solomon wisdom as well as honor. This wisdom brought Solomon much fame throughout the world. **1 Kings 10** records the Queen of Sheba visiting Solomon to prove him. Solomon was a very wise man in the Lord. The first half of his reign was given over to the things of God.

VI- Solomon's Failure. I Kings 11.

Remember I stated he was a wise man who became foolish. The last half of Solomon's reign was given over to building cities and foreign commerce. God had repeatedly told Solomon that He would bless him if he walked after the things of God. **1 Kings 6:11-13** is an example of this.

To understand where Solomon went wrong we need not look to close. **Deut 17:14-17** gave the kings rules to live by for a godly reign. Notice this section of scripture with me. The kings were not to **"multiply horses to**

himself...multiply wives to himself, that his heart turn not away: neither shall he greatly multiply to himself silver and gold."

Was Solomon aware of these warnings? If he were not it was because he failed in God's commandment for him. **Deut 17:18-19** tells us the king was to, **"write him a copy of this law in a book out of that which is before the priests and Levities: And it shall be with him, and he shall read therein all the days of his life: that he may learn to fear the Lord his God, to keep all the words of this law and their statutes, to do them."**

Solomon utterly failed at all these warnings. You might say that God gave Solomon his wealth and horses. Yes but Solomon's heart was turned to getting more above the blessings of God. It is not what you have it is what has you that God is interested in. Notice the following verse to illustrate Solomon's failure. **1 Kings 4:26; 9:26-28; 10:22, 26.**

Especially notice **1 Kings 11**. Solomon **"loved many strange women..." 11:1** Solomon allowed the lust of the flesh to rule his life. **11:3** says they turned his heart from God. Friends we cannot sleep with the Devil and walk with the Lord. Let me give us a lengthy quote to help us understand the significance of this.

"He began, as we have seen, by taking a foreign and heathen wife, the daughter of Pharaoh; to her he added wives from the Joabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Sidonians and Hitties, in short, from all the nations with whom God had expressly forbidden intermarriages (Ex 34:11-16); and in defiance of Moses to the king (Deut. 17:17), he

had 700 wives and 300 concubines, with the result Moses had foretold. In his old age, his wives turned away his heart from Jehovah to their gods and induced him to provide places for their worship." (*Old Testament History*, College Press, p. 543.)

The one who built the temple of God built pagan temples for his wives. This called down the wrath of God upon the nation of Israel. It resulted in the division of the nation. **1 Kings 11:29-32** records the prophecy that the kingdom would be split into two parts. The only reason that God allowed any part of the kingdom to be ruled by the descendants of David was because of the Davidic Covenant promise. God is true to His word. Notice **1 Kings 11:11-13** says because of David, God would not take it out of Solomon's hands but out of his sons. The heyday of Israel will pass with Solomon rule. With the completion of the reign of Solomon we come to the end of the Single Kingdom Period. The nation of Israel that came out of Egypt to enter the Promised Land will be divided after his reign.

Application to Life:

- 1- God is honored and glorified when we seek Godly wisdom. (see **James 1:5**)
- 2- God wants us to walk in His law and not after the world.
- 3- We should give God the riches we have and not the leftovers. The temples splendor shows us this.
- 4- We should be careful to not allow the blessings of God to become a curse to our spiritual condition.
- 5- We must be on guard for the lust of the eye, lust of the flesh and the pride of life always.

6- God will not be mocked. What we sow we reap.

3- What three things did Solomon multiply that he was warned not to?

Review of Session:

1- Who was the first temple named after? _____

2- What did Solomon ask God for?

4- Why was the kingdom not completely taken from David's line?
_____ Covenant.

PATH ONE SOURCES CITED

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