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King **SOLOMON**

Continuation of the series:
THE ISRAELI MONARCHY
Taught by Pastor Dan Betzer
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1 We have spent a few weeks on the life of King David, a man of so many
2 complexities, but a man also after God’s own heart. He reigned for forty
3 years over Israel, 33 of them from Jerusalem, the other first 7 from
4 Hebron. David was a man who loved women. He had eight wives who
5 were named in Scripture, but probably many others. This weakness in
6 David’s character was passed on to his son, Solomon, who, according to
7 the Bible, had 700 wives and 300 mistresses. This from a man who
8 originally was blessed with great wisdom! What happened? We shall see
9 as we open God’s Word together.

10



11 THE LAST DAYS OF KING DAVID - I Kings 1:1-4

12 *Now king David was old and stricken in years; and they covered him*
13 *with clothes, but he gat no heat. [2] Wherefore his servants said unto*
14 *him, Let there be sought for my lord the king a young virgin: and let her*
15 *stand before the king, and let her cherish him, and let her lie in thy*
16 *bosom, that my lord the king may get heat. [3] So they sought for a fair*
17 *damsel throughout all the coasts of Israel, and found Abishag a*
18 *Shunammite, and brought her to the king. [4] And the damsel was very*
19 *fair, and cherished the king, and ministered to him: but the king knew*
20 *her not.*

21

22 This all sounds salacious, but, in truth, it is not. Line 19 makes that clear:
23 “the king new her not.” Simply put, this was not a sexual situation. David
24 was old and feeble and Abishag was hired to tend to him, keeping him
25 alive a little bit longer. Her administrations did not succeed, for David
26 passed away soon after.

27

28 But now we are introduced to another of David unfaithful sons, Adonijah
29 (whose mother was Haggith):

30

31 THE COUP ATTEMPT BY ADONIJAH - I Kings 1:5-8

32 *Then Adonijah the son of Haggith exalted himself, saying, I will be*
33 *king: and he prepared him chariots and horsemen, and fifty men to run*
34 *before him. [6] And his father had not displeased him at any time in*
35 *saying, Why hast thou done so? and he also was a very goodly man; and*

1 *his mother bare him after Absalom. [7] And he conferred with Joab the*
2 *son of Zeruah, and with Abiathar the priest: and they following*
3 *Adonijah helped him. [8] But Zadok the priest, and Benaiah the son of*
4 *Jehoiada, and Nathan the prophet, and Shimei, and Rei, and the mighty*
5 *men which belonged to David, were not with Adonijah.*

6
7 Note: verse 6 (line 34) that David was not a good father, not taking care
8 of the necessary discipline Adonijah certainly required.

9
10 The first child David had by Bathsheba was a boy who died in infancy.
11 Solomon came along later and was born in Jerusalem. His battle for the
12 crown began before David died. David had promised Solomon's mother,
13 Bathsheba, that Solomon would be the royal heir after he passed away.
14 However, as David became old and frail, Adonijah conspired to claim the
15 throne. He got Joab and Abiathar, two who had supported David earlier,
16 to side with him and announced that he would now take the throne. He
17 invited many guests and threw a lavish feast to celebrate; sure that David
18 would not rebuke him, as he had been spoiled all his life.

19
20 But Nathan the Prophet heard of Adonijah's deceit and relayed the
21 information to Bathsheba and urged her to intercede. David was still alert
22 enough to do something about it. He instructed Nathan to take the priest
23 Zadok and formally anoint Solomon as king. Riding on David's mule,
24 Solomon arrived at the sacred place of anointing. Trumpets were blown
25 and all the multitude gathered proclaimed, "Long live King Solomon."
26 That destroyed Adonijah's plans to take the throne. Still, Solomon
27 pardoned his brother. But once again Adonijah made an attempt to usurp
28 the throne by marrying that young girl, Abishag, who had tended his father
29 prior to his death. No longer patient with him, Solomon had
30 Adonijah killed.

31
32 Solomon was still quite young by this time and wanted divine assurance
33 that he would be fit to govern, so he asked God for wisdom.

1 THE TROUBLE STARTS EARLY - I Kings 3:1-2

2 *And Solomon made affinity with Pharaoh king of Egypt, and took*
3 *Pharaoh's daughter, and brought her into the city of David, until he had*
4 *made an end of building his own house, and the house of the Lord, and*
5 *the wall of Jerusalem round about. [2] Only the people sacrificed in*
6 *high places, because there was no house built unto the name of the*
7 *Lord, until those days. And Solomon loved the Lord, walking in the*
8 *statutes of David his father: only he sacrificed and burnt incense in high*
9 *places. [4] And the king went to Gibeon to sacrifice there; for that was*
10 *the great high place: a thousand burnt offerings did Solomon offer upon*
11 *that altar.*

12
13 Note carefully: Solomon married an Egyptian princess, who brought her
14 gods with her to Jerusalem, and he, himself, offered sacrifices to false
15 gods. In just a short time, Solomon had put himself and his entire nation
16 in severe danger. It would only grow worse, despite God's efforts
17 to intervene.

18
19 I Kings 3:5-9

20 *In Gibeon the Lord appeared to Solomon in a dream by night: and God*
21 *said, Ask what I shall give thee. [6] And Solomon said, Thou hast*
22 *shewed unto thy servant David my father great mercy, according as he*
23 *walked before thee in truth, and in righteousness, and in uprightness of*
24 *heart with thee; and thou hast kept for him this great kindness, that thou*
25 *hast given him a son to sit on his throne, as it is this day. [7] And now,*
26 *O Lord my God, thou hast made thy servant king instead of David my*
27 *father: and I am but a little child: I know not how to go out or come in.*
28 *[8] And thy servant is in the midst of thy people which thou hast chosen,*
29 *a great people, that cannot be numbered nor counted for multitude. [9]*
30 *Give therefore thy servant an understanding heart to judge thy people,*
31 *that I may discern between good and bad: for who is able to judge this*
32 *thy so great a people?*

33
34 God was pleased that Solomon had asked for wisdom, as opposed to
35 wealth or power, and He granted the request. Solomon became famous for
36 his wisdom and knowledge. He was also a songwriter (Song of Solomon)

1 and a composer of parables and proverbs (which we have in Scripture).
2 He was also an expert on botany and zoology. His fame became known
3 all over the known world.

4

5 SOLOMON'S HORSES - I Kings 4:26

6 *And Solomon had forty thousand stalls of horses for his chariots, and*
7 *twelve thousand horsemen.*

8

9 As a person travels over Israel today, he or she encounters many structures
10 known to archeologists as stables for Solomon's horses.

11

12 "I visited the ruins at Megiddo that is, the mound that overlooks the
13 Valley of Armageddon (Esdraelon) where we believe that the great
14 issue will be finally settled in the days of the last battle. But the thing
15 that impressed me was the ruins there of Solomon's stables, stalls
16 and troughs where his horses ate. These stables would accommodate
17 at least 450 horses. Solomon multiplied horses, contrary to the
18 wisdom of God."

19 (THRU THE BIBLE / MCGEE / VOLUME 2 / PAGE 257 / NELSON PUBL.)

20

21 I have climbed Megiddo many times over the past forty years to view
22 those biblically-historic ruins. God did not want his rulers in Israel to
23 amass that kind of war power. But Solomon, growing ever more arrogant,
24 did what he wanted to do, not what God wanted.

25

26 Yet God continued to give much credibility to Solomon and his reign:

27

28 I Kings 4:29-34

29 *And God gave Solomon wisdom and understanding exceeding much,*
30 *and largeness of heart, even as the sand that is on the sea shore. [30]*

31 *And Solomon's wisdom excelled the wisdom of all the children of the*
32 *east country, and all the wisdom of Egypt. [31] For he was wiser than*
33 *all men; than Ethan the Ezrahite, and Heman, and Chalcol, and Darda,*
34 *the sons of Mahol: and his fame was in all nations round about. [32]*

35 *And he spake three thousand proverbs: and his songs were a thousand*
36 *and five. [33] And he spake of trees, from the cedar tree that is in*
37 *Lebanon even unto the hyssop that springeth out of the wall: he spake*

1 *also of beasts, and of fowl, and of creeping things, and of fishes. [34]*
2 *And there came of all people to hear the wisdom of Solomon, from all*
3 *kings of the earth, which had heard of his wisdom.*

4

5 One amazing case of Solomon's wisdom is found in I Kings 10. Here we
6 learn of a long trip made to Jerusalem by the queen of Sheba (Africa) who
7 had heard of Solomon's great wisdom and traveled all that way to see
8 for herself:

9

10 I Kings 10:1-7

11 *And when the queen of Sheba heard of the fame of Solomon concerning*
12 *the name of the Lord, she came to prove him with hard questions. [2]*
13 *And she came to Jerusalem with a very great train, with camels that*
14 *bare spices, and very much gold, and precious stones: and when she was*
15 *come to Solomon, she communed with him of all that was in her heart.*
16 *[3] And Solomon told her all her questions: there was not any thing hid*
17 *from the king, which he told her not. [4] And when the queen of Sheba*
18 *had seen all Solomon's wisdom, and the house that he had built, [5] And*
19 *the meat of his table, and the sitting of his servants, and the attendance*
20 *of his ministers, and their apparel, and his cupbearers, and his ascent*
21 *by which he went up unto the house of the Lord; there was no more*
22 *spirit in her. [6] And she said to the king, It was a true report that I*
23 *heard in mine own land of thy acts and of thy wisdom. [7] Howbeit I*
24 *believed not the words, until I came, and mine eyes had seen it: and,*
25 *behold, the half was not told me: thy wisdom and prosperity exceedeth*
26 *the fame which I heard.*

27

28 Since that long ago time, there have been periodic links between Israel
29 and Sheba. Sheba is usually aligned with Ethiopia in North Africa. The
30 Queen of Sheba was a woman of wealth, beauty and power, according to
31 the Word of God. She traveled that long distance to Jerusalem as she had
32 heard about the fame of its King, Solomon, and she came to test him with
33 hard questions.

34

1 Sources outside the Bible suggest that the Queen conceived a child in
2 secret with Solomon. But this probably more someone's imagination
3 than fact.

4
5 What may we learn from this episode? First, like King Solomon, believers
6 are to show evidence of God's favor in their lives. And, second, the
7 reputation of Christ's followers should precede them by their godly words
8 and action for we are Christ's ambassadors.

9
10 II Corinthians 5:20
11 *Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech*
12 *you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God.*

13
14 Once Solomon felt his kingship was firmly established, he set out to
15 complete the project that had been the goal of his late father, David; that
16 is, to build the Temple in Jerusalem. We will take that up next week in
17 our Bible study.

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