

## “The Book of 1<sup>st</sup> Kings” (Route 66)

All right, let’s turn in our Bibles... to 1<sup>st</sup> Kings... We INSERTED the Book of Psalms LAST SUNDAY... And—as we reached the END of 2<sup>nd</sup> Samuel—King David was nearing the END of his reign...

But God has promised that **“David shall never lack a man to sit on the throne of the house of Israel...”** – And—this morning—we see David’s son Solomon—his SON from his INFIDELITY with Bathsheba... Take his place on the throne of Israel...

Now, Solomon COMES ON THE SCENE with SOME drama... You see, even though—according to DAVID, down in Chapter 1, Verse 30—he had SWORN that **“Solomon... [will] be king after me...”** – ANOTHER of David’s sons—ADONIJAH—presumes to be king...

You see, 1<sup>st</sup> Kings OPENS by telling us that: **“King David was old, advanced in years...”** – Chapter 2, verse 1 says: **“the days of David drew near that he should die...”** – David’s about SEVENTY YEARS OLD at this point...

And, ADONIJAH—in Verse 5—**“exalted himself, [and said], ‘I will be king.’”** – Now, *technically*—at this point—Adonijah DOES SEEM to be the OLDEST SURVIVING SON of David... Still, GOD was the One Who wanted to put the next King on the throne...

And so, NATHAN and BENEIAH... come to David, and TELL him what Adonijah has done...

In Verse 28, David CALLS for Bathsheba. – And says, **“As the LORD lives, who has redeemed my life from every distress, just as I swore to you... saying, ‘Solomon your son shall be king after me’ so I certainly will do this day.”** – Verse 46 says: **“Solomon sits on the throne...”**

And when the SUPPORTERS of Adonijah HEAR about this, we read they **“were afraid,”** and **“Adonijah was afraid of Solomon...”** – And the Chapter CONCLUDES by telling us that Adonijah **“fell down before King Solomon; and Solomon said to him, ‘Go to your house.’”**

David Guzik writes: *“It was common—even expected (in ancient cultures)—that when a new king assumed the throne, he would execute every potential rival. Solomon not only let [this] rival live (in Adonijah), but one who openly subverted his reign. This was a large measure of grace & mercy on the part of Solomon.”*

Chapter 2 says: **“David rested with his fathers, and was buried in the City of David. [And] The period that David reigned over Israel was forty years...”** – Verse 12: **“Then Solomon sat on the throne of his father David; and his kingdom was firmly established.”**

Now, there's FOUR THINGS that we to FOCUS-ON, this morning, when it comes to SOLOMON... FIRST is his **WISDOM**... the second is his **WEALTH**... THIRD is his **CONSTRUCTION of the JEWISH TEMPLE**... and then—LASTLY—is Solomon's **FOLLY**.

Let's talk about his **WISDOM**... PROBABLY the attribute that Solomon is MOST KNOWN for. – In Chapter 3, we read that—

**“The LORD appeared to Solomon in a dream by night; and said, “Ask! What shall I give you?”** – In Verse 9, Solomon says: **“give to Your servant an understanding heart to judge Your people, that I may discern between good and evil.”**

And, **“The speech,”** we read, **“pleased the Lord, that Solomon had asked this thing. Then God said to him”** – Verse 11, of Chapter 3 – **“Because you have... not asked [for] long life... nor have asked [for] riches... nor... asked [for] the life of your enemies, but have asked for yourself understanding to discern justice...”** Then, **“Behold,”** Verse 12...

**“I have given you a wise and understanding heart, so that there has not been anyone like you before you... nor shall any like you arise after you.”** – **“AND,”** Verse 13... God says: **“I have also given you what you have not asked: both riches and honor, so that there shall not be anyone like you among the kings all your days.”** – **“So [that] if you walk in My ways, to keep My statutes and My commandments, as your father David walked, then I will lengthen your days.”** – Man, how would you like to hear THAT from the Lord???

Now—in Verse 16—in what has, sort of, become a “classic” account from scripture, we see this **‘Wisdom of Solomon’** in action... Let's read it together... Chapter 3, starting in Verse 16...

It says: **“Two women who were harlots came to the king, and stood before him. And one... said,”** Verse 17... **“O my lord, this woman and I dwell in the same house; and I gave birth while she was in the house. Then it happened, the third day after I had given birth, that this woman also gave birth. And we were together; no one was with us in the house...”** – In Verse 19, she says: **“And this woman’s son died in the night, because she lay on him.”**

So, she says, **“she arose in the middle of the night,”** Verse 20... **“and took my son from my side... and laid her dead child in my bosom. And when I rose in the morning to nurse my son, there he was, dead. But when I had examined him... indeed, he was not my son whom I had borne.”**

And, **“Then the other woman said,”** Verse 22... **“No! The living one is my son, and the dead one is your son.”** And the first woman said, **“No! The dead one is your son, and the living one is my son.”** Thus, they spoke before the king.”

NOW... In Verse 23... Solomon's trying to figure this out... He says: **“one says, ‘This is my son... and the other says, ‘No! Your son is the dead one...’”** Then the king said, **“Bring me a**

**sword.”** – And, in Verse 25, Solomon said: “**Cut the child in [half]... give [one] half to one, and [the other] half to the other.”**

And, “**Then the woman whose son was living spoke to the king,**” Verse 26... “**and... said, “O my lord, give her the living child, and by no means kill him!”** [But] the other [one] said, “**Let him neither be mine nor yours, but divide him.”**”

And Solomon said—in Verse 27— “**Give the first woman the... child... she is his mother.”**”

You know, I have done this VERY THING before with my OWN KIDS... ( I don’t mean cut them in half!)... I mean, if they are arguing over a LEGO SET, or a DONUT... I’m like, ‘*Let’s cut it in half!*’ – And, they’re like, ‘No!’ – It’s BRILLIANT! – And, Verse 28 says:

**“All Israel heard of the judgment which the king had rendered; and they feared the king, for they saw that the wisdom of God was in him to administer justice.”**

Chapter 4 ELABORATES on this... Verse 29, says: “**God gave Solomon wisdom and exceedingly great understanding, and largeness of heart like the sand on the seashore.**” – His “**wisdom excelled the wisdom of all the men of the East and all the wisdom of Egypt.”**”

**“He was wiser than all men,”** Verse 31 says... “**and his fame was in... the surrounding nations.”** – “**He spoke three thousand proverbs, and his songs were one thousand and five.”**”

Verse 34 says: “**men of all nations, from all the kings of the earth... came to hear the wisdom of Solomon.**” – Chapter 10, Verse 28 says: “**all the earth sought the presence of Solomon to hear his wisdom, which God had put in his heart.”**”

Now, Chapter Four ALSO gives us a GLIMPSE into the PROSPERITY of Solomon...

I’m gonna take these Verses SLIGHLTY out-of-order, but—in Verse 20 of Chapter 4—we read that: “**Judah and Israel were as numerous as the sand by the sea in multitude, eating and drinking and rejoicing.”** – Verse 22 says... (LISTEN TO THIS)...

**“Solomon’s provision for one day was thirty kors of fine flour, sixty kors of meal, ten fatted oxen, twenty oxen from the pastures, and one hundred sheep...”** – For a SINGLE DAY! – “**besides deer, gazelles, roebucks, and fatted fowl.”** – Verse 26 says:

**“Solomon had forty thousand stalls of horses for his chariots, twelve thousand horsemen.”** – Verse 21: “**Solomon reigned over all kingdoms from the River to the land of the Philistines, as far as the border of Egypt. They brought tribute and served Solomon all the days of his life.”**”

Verse 27 says that the various GOVERNORS, “**provided food for King Solomon and for all who came to... Solomon’s table.**” – Verse 28: “**They... brought barley and straw to the proper place, for the horses and steeds, each man according to his charge.**”

Verse 24... Solomon: “**had dominion over all the region on this side of the River, from Tiphsah even to Gaza... over all the kings on this side of the River; and he had peace on every side all around him. And Judah and Israel dwelt safely... all the days of Solomon.**”

And, this is where we begin to talk about the **WEALTH** of King Solomon...

Chapter 10 says: “**Solomon made two hundred large shields of hammered gold; six hundred shekels of gold went into each shield. He... made three hundred shields of hammered gold; three minas of gold went into each shield... Moreover the king made a great throne of ivory, and overlaid it with pure gold. Twelve lions stood there,**” we read that “**nothing like this had been made for any other kingdom.**” – Verse 21 says:

“**All... Solomon’s drinking vessels were gold... all the vessels of the House of the Forest... were pure gold. Not one was silver, for this was accounted as nothing in the days of Solomon.**” – In fact, Verse 27 says: “**The king made silver as common [as stones] in Jerusalem...**” (which, you can imagine, are PRETTY PLENTIFUL in the Middle East!)

Verse 22: “**The king had merchant ships at sea with the fleet of Hiram. Once every three years the merchant ships [brought] gold, silver, ivory, apes, and monkeys.**” – Verse 25 says: “**Each man brought... articles of silver and gold, garments, armor, spices, horses, and mules...**”

Verse 26 says: “**Solomon gathered chariots and horsemen; he had one thousand four hundred chariots and twelve thousand horsemen...**” – Verse 28: “**Solomon had horses imported from Egypt...**” – And, Verse 29 tells us that: “**a chariot... imported from Egypt cost six hundred shekels of silver, and a horse one hundred and fifty...**”

Now, I CANT HELP but point-out that... All the way back in Deuteronomy Chapter 17, when God was laying out REQUIREMENTS FOR A KING in Israel... He said, in Verse 16...

“**He shall not multiply horses for himself... nor cause the people to return to Egypt to multiply horses... nor shall he... multiply silver and gold for himself.**”

Here, we see that: “[Solomon] became a notorious breaker of [these] commands... [with] forty thousand stalls of horses... **and horses imported from Egypt.**” – And, I SHARE THAT as sort of a “**shape of things to come**” moment...

KEEP THIS IN MIND as we continue to look at Solomon, this morning... Verse 23 says: “**King Solomon surpassed all the kings of the earth in riches and wisdom.**”

In fact, DID YOU KNOW... 1<sup>st</sup> Kings Chapter 10 ACTUALLY TELLS US the ANNUAL INCOME of King Solomon? – Chapter 10, Verse 14, says: “**The weight of gold that came to Solomon yearly was six hundred and sixty-six talents of gold...**” – For context... that’s about **TWO BILLION DOLLARS** by today’s standards!

And, Verse 15 says, that was “**BESIDES [what came] from traveling merchants, from... traders, from all the kings of Arabia, and... the governors of the country.**” – David Guzik writes: “*Solomon received more than 666 talents of gold a year.... That was just his beginning salary!*”

Now... If you’re ANYTHING like me... you MIGHT look at that number—**666**—and think, “*Oh, that’s interesting!*” – And I believe you would be RIGHT to do so...

You see, the Bible doesn’t say ANYTHING ARBITRARILY... This is one of only TWO PLACES in scripture where the NUMBER 666 is associated with a PERSON... The OTHER is in connection with ‘The Antichrist,’ in the Book of Revelation... In Chapter 13, we read...

**“He causes all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and slave, to receive a mark on their right hand or on their foreheads, [so] that no one may buy or sell except one who has the mark or the name of the beast, or the number of his name.”**

Then, John writes: “**Here is wisdom. Let him who has understanding calculate the number of the beast, for it is the number of a man: His number is 666.**” – Now, what does that mean?

Could this mean that the Antichrist is somehow going to be a version of King Solomon reincarnated??? – I don’t think so (not necessarily)... But David Guzik writes:

“*It may indicate that the Antichrist may not be someone purely evil from the very beginning. He may be [someone] like Solomon – a good man, [who is ultimately] corrupted.*”

ANOTHER way to think about it is... SOLOMON—for all intents & purposes—was, like, the Ultimate Humanist... The RICHEST... the WISEST... with the MOST WOMEN, the MOST INFLUENTIAL...

Remember: The term ‘ANTI’ Christ does not mean ‘AGAINST’ Christ... it means ‘IN **PLACE** OF CHRIST,’ or ‘**IN-STEAD** OF CHRIST.’

And—when we look at what the WORLD VALUES TODAY—it’s MONEY, and INFLUENCE, and SEXUAL PROWESS... It MAY BE that the Antichrist—like Solomon—will be the ULTIMATE EMBODIMENT of the HUMANIST MINDSET...

That his DECEPTIVE, MISLEADING campaign will be—as it was from the very beginning—  
“*You don’t need GOD... You can BE your own God!*” – I mean, do we KNOW ANYONE who is KNOWN for being SMART... and RICH... and INFLUENTIAL... and POLITICAL???

I JUST THINK IT’S INTERESTING that Bible MAY BE PROVIDING... JUST A SUBTLE CLUE... in this NUMBER we see associated with the Antichrist and Solomon... **[Curious Bible students want to know!!!]**

So, Solomon is WISER than all others... he is WEALTHIER than all others... AND Solomon ALSO is the one USED BY GOD to **BUILD THE TEMPLE**...

If you remember—in 2<sup>nd</sup> Samuel Chapter 7—We read: **“It came to pass when [King David] was dwelling in his house, and the LORD had given him rest from... his enemies all around, that the king said to Nathan the prophet, ‘See now, I dwell in a house of cedar, but the ark of God dwells inside tent curtains.’”**

So, David is like, “*Hey... I live in a NICE HOUSE... I’m gonna build GOD a NICE HOUSE!*” – And, he gets the idea to **build the TEMPLE to replace the TABERNACLE**... Now, INSTEAD... God tells David: **“When your days are fulfilled, and you rest with your fathers... I will set up your seed after you, who will come from your body, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build a house for My name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever.”** – Now, we call this ‘The Davidic Covenant.’

It’s a BIG DEVELOPMENT in the Old Testament Narrative... Now, ULTIMATELY, we see these promises fulfilled in the MESSIAH—Jesus—the ‘Son of David,’ the ‘Root of Jesse.’

HOWEVER... these promises are **PARTIALLY FULFILLED IN SOLOMON**... When it comes to Bible Prophecy—A lot of times, there is a **NEAR-FAR ASPECT** to it...

Somebody might ask, “*What do you mean?*” – Well, if I were to **SHOW THIS** picture and say, “*Drive toward these mountains.*” – Everybody would know what I talking about, right?

HOWEVER... there is a BIG DIFFERENCE between driving to THIS MOUNTAIN... versus driving to THIS MOUNTAIN... There is a **GAP** between them... And yet, the term “MOUNTAINS” applies to ALL OF THEM...

Bible PROPHECY is a LOT LIKE THIS... A prophetic statement can appear **FLAT** on the surface... but—typically—there’s a lot of DIMENSION to it...

This is **WHY** Old Testament prophets STRUGGLED TO UNDERSTAND various prophecies about the MESSIAH... They couldn’t figure-out how the Messiah was going to REIGN IN GLORY, and SUFFER at the SAME TIME...

Now, you and I KNOW... Because WE UNDERSTAND there are TWO COMINGS of the Messiah... The FIRST COMING, where Jesus was born to SUFFER and DIE... And the SECOND COMING where He will REIGN IN POWER...

But WRITING FROM A DISTANCE... the Old Testament prophets wouldn't have KNOWN this... (This is what 1<sup>st</sup> Peter 1:10—12 is all about)...

So, there is a “**FAR**” fulfillment to God’s covenant with David... And, it’s COMMUNICATED IN the idea of David’s “**seed**” sitting on the throne of Israel “**FOREVER**”...

CLEARLY, that is NOT a reference to Solomon... That will ONLY be fulfilled in an EVENTUAL DESCENDANT of David—the MESSIAH... **BUT**... One author writes...

*“Each of [the promises made to David were] **partially** fulfilled in Solomon, David’s son and successor to his throne: Solomon ruled on David’s throne... God’s mercies never departed from Solomon, [even] though he sinned... Solomon built God a magnificent house [the temple].”*

So, that’s the “**NEAR**” fulfillment to the COVENANT that God makes with David... In Chapter 5, Solomon says: “**You know [that] my father David could not build a house for the name of the LORD... BECAUSE of the wars which were fought against him on every side...**”

1<sup>st</sup> Chronicles 28 corroborates this... David stands up and says: “**I had it in my heart to build a house... for the ark of the covenant... But God said to me, ‘You shall not build a house for My name, because you have been a man of war and have shed blood.’”** – But, THEN God TELLS David: “**It is your son SOLOMON who shall build My house... for I have chosen him to be My son, and I will be his Father.**”

“**Then,**” we read: “**David gave... Solomon the plans**” for the TEMPLE... “**the vestibule, its houses... treasures... upper chambers... inner chambers... the place of the mercy seat; and the plans for all that [David] had by the Spirit... [for] the house of God...**” – So, these are DETAILED instructions...

“**All this,**” David [said], “**the LORD made me understand in writing, by His hand upon me... And David said to... Solomon, “Be strong and of good courage, and do it; do not fear nor be dismayed, for the LORD God... will be with you. He will not leave you nor forsake you, until you have finished all the work for the service of the house of the LORD.”**”

And 1<sup>st</sup> Kings Chapter 6 says: “**It came to pass in the four hundred and eightieth year after the children of Israel had come out of the land of Egypt, in the fourth year of Solomon’s reign over Israel... that he began to build the house of the LORD.”**

By the way, this Verse is **ONE** of the ways we DATE the events the Exodus... Solomon began to reign in 971 BS, and ended at around 913 BS... So, this means that the Exodus took place at around 1447 BC...

Now, Chapter 5 tells us about Solomon's LABOR FORCE... Chapter 6 about the DIMENSIONS of the temple... Chapters **SEVEN & EIGHT** describes the FURNISHINGS of the temple...

This temple is considered "*one of the most magnificent structures of the ancient world,*" and MODERN ESTIMATES of its construction costs range from 300-500 **BILLION** dollars! – And this Temple becomes a SIGNIFICANT PART of the Biblical **Backdrop** from here on out...

The LAST VERSE of Chapter 6 says: "**in the eleventh year... the house was finished in all its details and according to its plans. So [Solomon] was seven years in building it.**"

And—remember—2<sup>nd</sup> Chronicles Chapter 3 TELLS us that Solomon built "**on Mount Moriah... at the place [where] David had [built the altar] on the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite.**" – This is "*the same hill where Abraham offered Isaac... and the same set of hills where Jesus died on the cross.*" – That's amazing!

Now, Solomon's SPEECH and PRAYER OF DEDICATION at the Temple form a... *fairly* well-known passage of scripture... And—AFTER the work is completed—God appears to Solomon a SECOND time, and says... (see if you recognize these words... From 2<sup>nd</sup> Chronicles 7)...

**"I have heard your prayer, and have chosen this place for Myself as a house of sacrifice." – "When I shut up heaven and there is no rain, or command the locusts to devour the land, or send pestilence among My people... 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 I will hear from heaven, and... forgive their sin and heal their land."**

Now, I KNOW—a LOT of times—these Verses are sort of 'commandeered' and USED in connection with modern, American political sensibilities... but the CONTEXT of this was DEDICATION of Solomon's Temple...

God says, "**My eyes will be open and My ears attentive to prayer made in this place. For I have chosen and sanctified this house, that My name may be there forever; and My eyes and My heart will be there perpetually.**" – THEN, God tells Solomon—in 1st Kings 9, Verse 4

**"If you walk before Me as your father David walked, in integrity of heart and... uprightness, to do according to all that I have commanded... and if you keep My statutes and... judgments, then I will establish the throne of your kingdom over Israel forever... But if you or your sons at all turn from following Me, and do not keep My commandments and My statutes which I have set before you, but go and serve other gods... then I will cut off Israel from the land which I have given them; and this house which I have consecrated**

**for My name I will cast out of My sight. Israel will become a proverb and a byword among all peoples.”**

“But,” Chapter 11 begins... “**King Solomon loved many foreign women...**” – And THIS... is what brings us to the **FOLLY** of King Solomon... (or what I like to call “**Solomon’s Big But!**”)

Now, we already SAW that Solomon IGNORED God’s instructions about “**not multiply[ing] horses for [your]self,**” or “**caus[ing]... people to return to Egypt to multiply horses,**” or “**not multiply[ing] silver and gold...**”

And—once more—ALL THE WAY BACK in Deuteronomy 7... God TOLD the Children of Israel: “**When the LORD your God brings you into the land which you go to possess, and... casts out many nations before you, the Hittites... the Gergashites, the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Perizzites, the Hivites and the Jebusites...**” – God says: “**You shall make no... marriages with them. You shall not give your daughter to their son, nor take their daughter for your son.**” – And, here’s WHY... God says:

“**They will turn your sons away from following Me, to serve other gods...**” – And “**SO the anger of the LORD will be aroused against you and destroy you suddenly.**”

So, God TELLS the Children of Israel NOT to intermarry with the PAGAN PEOPLE GROUPS... Because, “*They will TURN YOUR HEARTS from following ME...*”

But NOW, we come to Solomon... Who—up to THIS point—has been the WISEST MAN who ever lived... the RICHEST MAN who ever lived... the one GOD USES to build the TEMPLE...

BUT, Chapter 11 says... “**BUT... Solomon loved many foreign women...**”—LISTEN: “**women of the Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Sidonians, and Hittites—**” – Verse 2: “**from the nations... whom the LORD... said... “You shall not intermarry with them... [for] they will turn... your hearts after their gods.”**” – “**Solomon clung to these in love,**” we read... “[So it was],” Verse 4, “**when Solomon was old, that his wives TURNED HIS HEART after other gods; and his heart was not loyal to the LORD his God...**”

IN OTHER WORDS: EXACTLY what God SAID would happen HAPPENED! – We read: “**Solomon went after Ashtoreth the goddess of the Sidonians... Milcom the abomination of the Ammonites.**” – Verse 7 says: “**Solomon built a high place for Chemosh the abomination of Moab... and for Molech... And he did likewise for all his foreign wives...**”

WHAT HAPPENED to Solomon has been the DOWNFALL of MANY A CHRISTIAN... We read Solomon “**clung in love**” to something God said, “**Have nothing to DO with.**”

Scripture tells us: “**Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness...**” – In 2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians, Paul told his readers: “**You’re not hindered by US, but you ARE hindered by your own AFFECTIONS.**” – In other words, Paul says...

“*It’s NOT the words of the Preacher that are making you so miserable... It’s not the teachings of the Pastor that are somehow holding you back.*” – “*You’re being HELD BACK—and HINDERED—by the things you have developed an AFFECTION for, and ATTACHEMENT to.*”

This has been the destruction of MARRIAGES, and FAMILIES, and LIVES, and CAREERS, and MINISTRIES, and CHRISTIAN WALKS...

Do we “**cling in love**” to something that God has told us NOT to have ANYTHING to DO with? – Solomon did... And, guess what happened... Verse 9 says: “**the LORD became angry, because [Solomon’s] heart [was] turned from the LORD God of Israel...**”

Verse 11 says: “**The LORD said to Solomon, “Because you have done this, and have not kept My covenant and My statutes... I will... tear the kingdom away from you and give it to your servant.”**

Can you **IMAGINE?** – The **RICHEST**... the **WISEST**... the most **INFLUENTIAL MAN** who EVER LIVED... who **HAD IT ALL** (and **MORE!**)... develops an AFFECTION for something specific that God said, “*It will ruin you.*” – And TOWARDS THE END of his career...

We read about a guy named Jeroboam... Verse 26 says he “**rebelled against the king.**” – In Verse 29, we read: “**It happened... when Jeroboam went out of Jerusalem, that the prophet Ahijah... met him on the way; and... Ahijah took hold of [his] garment... and tore it into twelve pieces.**” – “**And he said to Jeroboam,**” Verse 31...

‘**Behold, I will tear the kingdom out of the hand of Solomon and will give ten tribes to you...**’ – “**BECAUSE,**” God says, in Verse 33... “**he has forsaken Me, and worshiped Ashtoreth... [and] Chemosh... [and] Milcom... and has not walked in My ways to do what is right in My eyes and keep My statutes and My judgments, as did his father David.**”

And THIS is where... the once UNIFIED, PROSPEROUS, BUSTLING, RICH Kingdom of Israel... is DIVIDED into **TWO KINGDOMS**... Israel to the NORTH, and Judah to the SOUTH... **BECAUSE** of Solomon’s folly...

And, this not only “sets the stage” for the REST of 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Kings... Because, really, what the REST of THIS Book is all about, and **THAT Book**... are all the VARIOUS KINGS of these TWO KINGDOMS... And the DIFFERENT PROPHETS that God SENDS to EACH of them...

But it ALSO provides some CONTEXT for what we READ when we come to the Book of Ecclesiastes... Where we HEAR Solomon saying things like: “**Vanity of vanities... all is**

**vanity.” – “I have seen all the works that are done under the sun; and indeed, all is vanity...” – “I looked on all the works that my hands had done and on the labor in which I had toiled; And indeed all was vanity... For what has man for all his labor, and for the striving of his heart... all his days are sorrowful, and his work burdensome; even in the night his heart takes no rest.”**

It's just a BITTER, CYNICAL LAMENT... as OPPOSED to the Wisdom of the Proverbs... Which was written EARLIER in Solomon's life...

One represents Solomon BEFORE his heart turned from following the Lord... And the OTHER represents his heart AFTER turning from following the Lord...

And so, over the next few weeks, we're going to LOOK at these various Writings of Solomon... MUCH the way we did with PSALMS and DAVID...

We'll start with PROVERBS, next week—which represents his WISDOM... And then Song of Solomon—which is connected to his relationship with WOMEN... But this—ultimately—is what leads to his DOWNFALL, which is EXPRESSED in the Book of Ecclesiastes...

Dr. Graham Scroggie writes: “*Solomon was a strange character... characterized by wisdom AND wickedness; gifted intellectually, but weak ethically. His mind and his morals were not on the same level.*”

And—IN Solomon—I think the Christian should find a CAUTIONARY TALE about “finishing well.” – It doesn't matter how well we START the race... We want to be like Paul the Apostle who said, “**I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.**”

Towards the END of Chapter 11, we read that: “**the period that Solomon reigned in Jerusalem over all Israel was forty years. Then Solomon rested with his fathers, and was buried in the City of David his father. And Rehoboam his son reigned in his place.**”

And so... **THAT SETS US UP**... for where we'll RESUME once we have finished PROVERBS... SONG of SOLOMON, and ECCLESIASTES... That's what's ahead... as Route 66 continues!