



Walking in the *Foot Prints* of Jesus A Discipleship Journey

The OLD TESTAMENT- Their Story is Our Story
Solomon - 1 Kings, Chapter 3-11

King David's son, Solomon, became king following David's death. Solomon was young. He had older brothers who had designs on being the king, but David insured that Solomon was anointed. Solomon knew that, in some ways, he was not ready to rule the vast Israelite nation. The Lord appeared to Solomon in a dream: "Ask something of Me and I will give it to you."

Solomon replied, "Give Your servant an understanding heart to judge Your people and to distinguish right from wrong. For who is able to govern this vast people of Yours?"

The Lord was pleased with this request. God gave Solomon the wisdom he requested. In addition, the Lord gave him riches and glory among the other kings. However, over time all of this power and wealth began to erode Solomon's faithfulness to God. Solomon was king during a peaceful time and he made sure it remained peaceful by making alliances, marrying women from pagan nations and allowing the worship of their gods, being ruthless with his enemies, enslaving people, and taxing the Israelites heavily. He used his wisdom to accomplish great things. He built a temple to house the Arc of the Covenant; he built a beautiful palace for himself; and he took the Princess of Egypt as one of his 700 wives. At the dedication of the temple, God warned Solomon that he must remain faithful to only God in order for God to establish His sovereignty over Israel forever. God would take the land away from the Israelites if they continued to worship false gods. Solomon did not heed God's warning and continued to build his wealth of gold and wives and continued to allow the worship of pagan gods.

When Solomon became old, God said to him, "Since this is what you want, and you have not kept My covenant and My statutes which I enjoined on you, I will deprive you of the kingdom and give it to your servant." God promised that He would take away the land held by 10 tribes and leave but one to Solomon's son. God raised up adversaries and, when Solomon died, the Israelite nation fell apart.

Power and wealth are a dangerous combination. Solomon succumbed to the temptations that come with power and wealth. He gave into worldly possessions and forgot about being faithful to God. Of course, that happens in our lives as well. When life is good and easy and we have enough, we sometimes forget that all we have is a gift from God. We need to focus on the wealth of our relationship with God, the power that God gives us to do His will. Only then can we be truly happy.

Think about the things that make you truly happy. Would God be pleased?