

## WEEKLY DEVOTIONAL GUIDE

March 26

### MONDAY

Hearing the response from the two women, Solomon knew immediately which one was the true mother. And he ordered the baby given to her.

Word of this spread across the nation, and people respected the king greatly, for they saw what great wisdom he had.

**READ: I Kings 3:27-27**

The people of Israel saw the wisdom of God in Solomon. That has always been God's plan - that others would see something of God in His people. God's plan is that your co-workers, neighbors, family, and friends would see in you the goodness and holiness of God Himself. That's why we must start the day with determination and prayer: that we would live for God in such a way that people see Jesus in us. That must be our prayer for today!

### TUESDAY

In today's text, we read about some of the men Solomon put into places of leadership in his kingdom. We might call them his "Cabinet".

**READ: I Kings 4:1-6**

This is an interesting collection of people. We read that Nathan had two sons (Nathan was the prophet who confronted David about his sin with Bathsheba, who, by the way was, Solomon's mother). Both sons were in Solomon's Cabinet, his inner circle of advisors. Solomon did not hold it against the two that their father had publicly rebuked his father. In his wisdom, Solomon gives us an example of one who forgives, and forgives completely. That's always wise!

### WEDNESDAY

Solomon had twelve deputies who provided for the king and his ever growing household. They're listed along with their region of responsibility.

**READ: I Kings 4:7-19**

As we read about the regions each one was responsible for, we notice that these twelve regions are not the areas allotted to the twelve Tribes of Israel. Solomon saw the competition between tribes as a bad thing for the kingdom, and he "re-divided the land," so to speak, to remove that spirit of animosity. It reminds us, I'm sure, of the church where old barriers (financial status, education level, finances, race, etc.) are broken down, and instead, God makes us a family. I'm so glad I'm a part of that family! How about you?

### THURSDAY

The extent of Solomon's kingdom is described. Also, in order to portray the

size of Solomon's household, the amount of food required to feed everyone for one day is listed. It's a lot of food!

**READ: I Kings 4:20-23**

The manager of ACME in downtown Jerusalem was always a happy guy when he saw the palace cook appear everyday with his shopping list and 82 shopping carts ready to buy! Solomon supported at least several thousand people directly, and they apparently ate well, enjoying things such as *fattened fowl*. One of the issues that crept into Solomon's life and caused such problems down the road was his love of luxury. We see it starting here. All sin has a starting point. Often it's something that doesn't seem so bad by itself. But it lays a poor foundation. What kind of foundation are we building today?

### FRIDAY

The peaceful state of Solomon's kingdom is described: it extended across the land and into the surrounding nations. All during his reign, the citizens of Israel enjoyed peace and safety.

**READ: I Kings 4:24-26**

The people *lived in safety, every man under his [grape] vine and fig tree*. What a neat picture of serenity and calm! Picture the family in the cool of the evening relaxing in the yard, sipping grape juice and nibbling on Fig Newtons! Now picture them opening a Bible and having family devotions! The purpose of human government - in Solomon's reign or in President Trump's - is to allow the people to not be concerned about security so that they can live their lives for the Lord. That's what we are to do with the safety we enjoy today.

### SATURDAY

Solomon had 40,000 horses and 12,000 horsemen. The twelve deputies provided well for his household and they lacked nothing.

**READ: I Kings 4:27-28**

Deut.17:16 forbids the accumulation of horses which somehow connected to the way things were back in Egypt when Israel was enslaved there. Solomon apparently ignored that command. Yet, he didn't really need a cavalry that size: all the years of his reign, Israel was at peace. So it seems that Solomon was somewhat caught up in the pomp and display of his wealth. God has blessed us, too, (to various degrees) with wealth in order that we may bless others. It's never His plan that we, in any way, keep our wealth, but that we share it. The issue is never how much we have, but often, how much we keep, and how generously we bless others in the name of Jesus.